

Observations of Robert Patrick's Latin Classes.

Park View High School, Gwinette County, Georgia. April 25-27, 2006.

By John Piazza

I had the opportunity to observe Bob teaching five sections of Latin over the course of three days, and I thought that other teachers might be interested in reading about what I saw. First I have written a basic description of the classes. This is followed by my comments which are based on my reactions, and conversations we had during my stay. I have not yet posted Bob's assignments and handouts which are mentioned below, but most of them are available on the Latin-BestPractices page under "files."

The Classroom.

Bob (hereafter BP) has chosen to organize the desks in two groups of 15 (5 wide, 3 deep) which face each other, with a corridor down the middle. On one end of this corridor is a white board and projector screen. A television and computer sit in the corner to the left. In the center of the corridor there is a round table, upon which rest stacks of manila student folders (performance portfolios, to be discussed later). Next to the round table, on the side facing the white board, is a smaller table with an overhead projector. On the opposite end of the corridor is BP's desk. The walls are cinderblock, and floor-to-ceiling windows are in one corner of the room (to the left of BP's desk),

which leaves a lot of wall space. On one wall is a wide bulletin board, which BP has covered with colored paper, and posted various items pertaining to Latin, as well as announcements. On the opposite wall, BP has posted pictures of Looney Toons characters, with comic bubbles, which have familiar phrases, but in Latin (e.g. “eh, quid agis Medice?” and “Puto me felem vidisse”). Beneath each desk is a copy of *Lingua Latina per se Illustrata* by Hans Ørberg. BP recently acquired a classroom set for use as supplemental reading.

Latin I

BP teaches two periods of Latin I, one during second period, and one immediately after lunch. I have combined my observations of both sections.

Day One, Tuesday.

Students enter the classroom and sit down. BP says: *extrahite libros legendos et libellos*. Students take out their copies of *Lingua Latina* from under their desks, and open the books to the page at which they left off. BP then sets a timer for five minutes, and says “*parati sumus?*.” Once he is sure that the students have their books out and open, he begins the timer. Students do silent reading at their own pace. During this time, BP takes care and performs other minor administrative tasks, and makes sure his lesson materials are in order. When the timer beeps, BP says: *scribite notas in libellis*. Students must record the page(s) they have read, write a brief *breviarium* (description in Latin of the

story) and mark the number of times they had to stop and translate (i.e. look up) a word.

Next, BP says, *Extrahite libros. Aperite ad fabulam quam legimus heri.* He tells them to silently re-read the story—*deinde habemus quaestiones.* The students know that BP will then ask them questions in Latin about the story. On the previous day, students worked in pairs writing Latin questions about the story and answers to those questions. BP has taken those questions, and written 8 or 9 examples on a transparency sheet. Once he puts the questions on the overhead projector, students are instructed to break up into yesterday's pairs, and collaborate on writing answers. While students can work together, each student must have his/her own sheet which will be placed in their performance portfolios (*loculamentum*). Students must write out the question and an answer.

After ten minutes, BP asks groups the questions orally, and students must respond, making use of their written answers. While this is happening, students who are not being questioned correct their own answers.

Next activity: preview of next story.

BP says "I need a volunteer." Students are somewhat aware of what comes next, because this is not the first time BP has done a micrologue. Once a student volunteers, BP says: I want you to pay attention to the pictures on the projector, and what I am

saying. The rest of you need to pay attention and take dictation. You will hear this story three times.”

On the projector are five crude drawings of things and stick figures, each representing a scene which BP describes in one or two brief sentences. This is a basic summary of the story students will be reading in class tomorrow. BP points to each picture, and clearly says the sentence. After going through this three times, he asks the volunteer leading questions. These questions supply most of the answer, at least at first, e.g. sentence: magna turba est in via. Question Estne magna turba in via?, then ubi est magna turba? or quid est in via? etc. He then asks the volunteer to play his role, that is, pointing to the pictures and saying the original sentences. Once student finishes, all applaud. Then, BP tells the class to get out a different colored marker, and correct their own work. then, students place this sheet in their Loculamenta.

Homework is to read the next story three times out loud.

Day Two, Wednesday.

Students enter the classroom, and BP says: extrahite libros legendos et libellos. Paratine sumus?

While students get out their materials, BP tells them a story in Latin that a student just told him as she came in. He takes role while students read for five minutes (using a timer). When the

timer rings, he says scribite in libellos.

Next activity. For five minutes BP asks the class questions in Latin about the reading they did last night. Questions make use of interrogatives in various cases: quis, quem, cui, etc. these require answers in specific cases. Also, “secundum quintum, ubi est...? Looking for a character’s opinion. This requires students to think about the content of the story, not just the forms. These questions also remind students of the micrologue from the previous day, and many answers are similar to the sentences used in that micrologue. He also asks students to describe the characters using various adjectives. During the later period of this class BP’s questions are more focused, and in a logical order, proceeding from basic comprehension questions, to questions about grammar which require students to explain grammatically (in Latin) the answers they gave. Here is a sample list of questions.

Describite mihi quid accidat in fabula “Tabernae.

Quis tabernam quaerebat?

Cui Quintus tabernam quaerebat?

cuius casus est ____?

Cuius taberna est? Quis tabernam possidebat?

Cur taberna est in loco optima? Ubi est?

BP introduces the word vicinitas in context, by describing the location of the taberna (in vicinitate templi).

Then he asks them about another new word (opera) which he discussed briefly in English the previous day. “Describite mihi

Opera” Students respond with a variety of adjectives, and a few with sentences beginning “homo qui...”

If BP asks a difficult question of the group, and only one or two students are able to answer, he acknowledges that student, and then asks the whole group, until everyone is giving the correct answer.

Next Task

Students move desks into facing pairs, and get with their partners from yesterday. BP hands out a sheet which contains 5 boxes. 2 boxes are for part one, and 3 for part two. Each box has a set of lines from the story which the picture should represent. “Remember our story yesterday? I want you to read the story once, discuss the most important things in the story, and draw them in the boxes. Then put a Latin caption beneath each box. Do not copy from the text. Put it in your own Latin words.” Students have the remainder of the period to finish. Some students are not clear about the assignment, and it is taking students longer to complete than BP had anticipated. Once he realizes this, he announces to the class: “I planned too much for today.” He modifies the assignment to: “finish 2 drawings for part 1 in class today (if you have not finished that, that is your homework). If you have finished part 1, then work on part 2 tonight for a head start. We will work on part 2 in class tomorrow, and then you will place them in your loculamenta.”

Day three, Thursday

Students immediately get out their picture/caption pages and get to work in their same pairs. They will use the entire class to finish these projects, as they are due in the loculamenta today.

During class, BP uses a question about wiping hair on slaves to comment on slavery, Petronius, and the difference between something being common, and being right. As students work, BP hands out student progress reports. Students may look at them, write questions on them and hand them back, and BP will talk with them individually if necessary.

Note on performance portfolio.

The performance portfolio is used by BP primarily as a formative (rather than summative) assessment. He does this usually before a big testing time, e.g. midterms or finals. Students are required to place 4 or 5 completed assignments in their folders, which are worth 20 points each. These are given completion grades, that is, he only subtracts points if the assignments are lacking in some significant way. Because it is formative, it is not worth as much of a percentage as other tests, but it is significant.

Latin Two

Day One, Tuesday

Students enter the classroom to find written on the board: *petite comitem et considite in mensis alius trans alium. Eligite comitem quocum tu bene laborabis.*

New vocabulary words are given with English definition in a box to the side. Slowly, students realize that the text on the board pertains to them, and they ask each other what it means. BP then repeats the phrase, making sure students understand. Next to these instructions on the board, is another set of instructions, which BP points out and reads aloud:

Aperite libros ad capitulum.

1. *legite ter (3x) alius alio* [BP made this up in lieu of the phrase “*vicissim*,” which slipped his mind that morning]
2. *describite fabulam Latine alius alio.*
3. *Unâ pingite scaenam de fabula*
4. *Scribite V quaestiones de narratione, et responsa*

After some clarification in English, students get to work, reading, then discussing in simple Latin phrases. He mentions that students may work together, but each must have his/her own page, as it will go in their *loculamentum* at the end of class. If students have not finished, they will be allowed to finish the assignment as homework, and place it in their *loculamentum* before class the next day.

A few students do not understand the passage after reading it three times. BP then asks a few Latin questions which require students to understand content and vocabulary. He also translates a few passages for students, when it is clear that they still do not understand. For the remainder of class, students work in pairs, and at the end of class, BP hands out their *loculamenta*, in which they place their work.

Day two, Wednesday.

Extrahite libros legendos. Students read from Ørberg for 5 minutes, then write in their *libelli*.

Students are then instructed to break up into the same pairs as yesterday. “*extrahite libros et videte quaestiones*” Today, they must answer 6 questions about the reading, which BP has taken from the questions they produced yesterday, and written on a transparency and placed on the overhead projector. through these instructions , he encourages students to use the reading itself in helping them write out Latin answers to the questions. Then he says “*Potestis collaborare cum comitibus.*” Students are allowed to talk to each other in English.

Often, a student will ask “*quomodo dicitur_____?*” and the word or phrase will be only indirectly related to the reading, and could potentially frustrate the student. BP asks them to go back to the reading and find the pertinent passage. Look for the vocabulary

used in the reading, and modify it for an answer. This also discourages students' instinct to think of a concept in English and then search for the Latin equivalent. BP's strategy is to bring them back to the Latin as much as possible. After a few students have asked these questions, he announces to the entire class to open their books, and use the text to help them. e.g. "Where in the story do you know that the emperor wants to punish Epaphroditus?" A student finds the sentence, then BP asks her to read it to the class. Then he asks the class "Which verbs are important?" Students respond. Then BP says "take that key sentence, and shorten it to a basic statement."

Most of the talk is in English, but it all reinforces comprehension of the story, and of Latin usage.

BP then reads the questions aloud, and asks pairs, in Latin, to answer the questions, in Latin. When a student answers the question, BP repeats their answer, emphasizing any corrections he may make to what the student just said. He also follows up questions with more specific questions about details of the episode in the story. After one student has answered, he will ask "quis respondit aliter?" Occasionally, he will break in English to clarify a point. During this, he also notices that some students do not have their questions finished, and says "If you don't have answers to these, I hope you are taking notes, because you need to hand these in very soon." For the second section of this class, BP says at the beginning of this activity: "Now is the time to

take notes, especially if you are having trouble or didn't finish.” During the q and a, the issue of active and passive comes up. Regarding the activity or passivity of a given verb, BP asks “how is this verb significant to the story? what effect does it have on the story?” To two students who were absent the previous day, he asks “are you guys following this?”

Next activity: introduce next reading.

Vertite ad fabulam proximam

BP reads the first phrase aloud, “paucis post diebus” and then asks “ubi scaena accidit?” Students catch on and begin to answer. BP reads each sentence, gives a brief explanation in Latin, and then asks a few questions in Latin. Often, he will look around “Intelligitisne?)

BP uses interrogatives in various cases in order to get students to respond with the right case endings, as well as vocabulary which demonstrates comprehension of content. Here is an incomplete script of the q and a:

quid egit? vocavit

quem vocavit?

quomodo vocavit? in epistula

Quem epistulam recepit?

A quo epistulam accepit? a Viteliâ

Quis est? Uxor

Dscribe Vitelia. aegra, insana, infirma, etc.

“Eheu. Domitia laeta aut anxia?” He physically demonstrates verbs or concepts, and asks “quid significat Latine?” Students

give a variety of adjectives.

“Mihi visitanda est. Quid significat Latine?” A student answers “Necesse est mihi visitare” and BP offers “debeo eam visitare.”

Homework is to read the story aloud three times.

Day three, Thursday.

Students begin class by reading the story “insidiae” silently. As students read, BP hands out their progress reports. On the board is a “mind map” which is basically a few clouds and circles connected by lines. Next to the mind map is a list of characters from the story, with numbers from 1 to 5. Each group of 3-4 students will be assigned one or two characters. The assignment in class is to map out the relationships from the standpoint of your assigned character(s). For homework, on the back of the mind map sheet, write a description of what you think will happen next, minimum 7 sentences.

Before students begin, BP reads the story out loud, while students follow along: “Legite mecum in silentio” BP reads aloud with emphasis, and stops to describe new words, and potentially obscure phrases. To a student who is tunes out, BP whispers: “follow along. I’m on line 17” Later he goes back to the student “you still with us? Line 30.” Next, BP divides the students into groups, and says: “discuss,, decide, copy each other, but each of you must have your own mind map.” Students

are a bit slow getting into groups, and they are having trouble grasping the assignment. The students who are really having trouble easily become distracted, and begin gossiping. This is because the assignment requires them to draw from their knowledge of the events of previous chapter readings. BP reminds students of the characters and relationships in order to help them get started. A group of the most struggling students ends up with the most difficult character, and they are somewhat lost. In another group, the students have finished early. BP instructs one of the students from this group to be an “envoy” and help the struggling groups. He instructs the other students from this group to begin their homework. He then offers a few examples of the relationships. [he probably should have modeled this activity briefly before expecting the students to do it.] Before the next section of this class meets, BP and I discuss the effectiveness of the mind map. Modifications are made, and BP resolves to explain the assignment in more detail. The included diagram is of the revised map. Also, he decides to count off the groups rather than group students who are already sitting together. This is in part what caused a few of the groups to be weaker than others.

Latin Three

Day one, Tuesday

On Monday, BP handed out a page containing 11 lines from Book 1 of the Aeneid. Below the text, he has listed new vocabulary, with definitions or descriptions IN LATIN. On the

backside of the page is an explicatio, that is, a Latin summary in prose of the lines. There is also an introduction to the lines, in the form of a simple summary of the passage, in a few comprehensible sentences. Students have also received and reviewed a handout explaining the questions (in Latin) that they should be prepared to answer. The students came up with these questions while discussing what questions were typically asked in their English literature classes. They have read through the lines and the explicatio, and this is the first time they have tackled the lines, as well as this format.

BP begins by reading the explicatio aloud, stopping to ask questions. Here he focuses on comprehension the content and new words: “explicate. Quid est _____?”

Then he reads the verses out loud, emphasizing the elisions, and making sure the students recognize this. Then, the class read the lines as a group. Next, BP calls on individual students:

quid agit in loco nostro?

quid plus?

_____, lege nobis.

Quid accidit?

Ubi est res scaenae?

Quid tempus Praesens? Post troiam dereptam/peritam

Quaestio difficillima: quae est scaena? via nova, terra nova.

Next they discuss the genus scribendi. English Q and A.

Announces that there will be a quiz tomorrow.

Day Two, Wednesday.

Class begins with all students reading the verses aloud together. BP then calls on individual students to read: *sta et lege, magna voce.*

Asks for volunteers: *quis vult legere?*

He then points out the elisions, speaking about it in Latin. Then he asks for more volunteers, almost all of whom observe the elisions.

Next, BP asks for students to explain the lines, in Latin, that is, an oral breviarium

(transcript of the dialogue between BP and students):

quid significat versus I et II?: Aeneas spectat Tyrios cum admiratione.

BP: *quomodo describimus versus I et II?* Student responds: *admiratio.* BP: *cuius admiratio? Quis habet admirationem?*

Instant ardentis Tyrii. Quid significat? fortasse simpliciter "laborant".

Quis laborant? Tyrii.

Ardentes. Suntne flammae in capite? In corde

Flamma est in corde! Estne flamma vera vel similis? Similis, est sensus corporis.

Molirique arcem. Quid significat?

Next, BP puts questions about the passage on the overhead and announces:

omnes cum comitibus respondete ad quaestiones, et deponite in loculamentis. Tantum Latine.

After 10 minutes, BP interrupts: nunc colloquamur de quaestionibus. He carries a clipboard on which he gives participation credit. All students are prepared to answer questions orally because they have their answers written down.

Day Three, Thursday

BP begins in Latin: extrahite notas tuas de libro primo Aeneidos. Vos omnes habetis V minutas ut studeatis notas. Tum, deinde, habebimus probationem brevem de textu, sine notis—ex memoria” He then sets the timer, and clarifies in English for students who did not understand everything.

After 5 minutes: “Deponite notas, et extrahite cartam puram, et stilum. Probatio erit facilis.”

Puts one question up on overhead projector: “describe quid accidat in loco libri primi Aeneidos. Da exempla. Scribe in sententiis perfectis.” Students have 10 minutes.

Next BP: Extrahite pennam alius coloris et, cum notis, scribite aliquid quod tu non scripsi in carta.

He then asks “quid scripsistis?” Students offer answers, and BP writes them on the overhead, correcting as he goes. “Quid plus?”

After this, students place their sheets in their loculaments (part of formative assessment, performance portfolio)

New task:

BP: “Nunc habeo notas novas” This is a page which presents lines from the next CLC Vergil reading in the same way as the previous handout. He begins by pointing out elisions “nunc inveniamus elisiones” and then reads slowly to the class, describing them in Latin making use of the praefatio and physical demonstration.

“Legamus una voce” The entire class reads the lines aloud.

Next he asks the class “scribite versus ut prosa” Gives the class a brief oral demonstration of the first few lines, and then has them work in pairs. [Here he could have modeled the activity in more detail, perhaps on the board, because quite a few students did not know where to begin. Although they had written explicationes before, this was an especially new and difficult reading.]

Homework: finish explicatio. Read the rest of the sheet. Tomorrow there will be more group work.

General comments:

Vocabulary.

BP does not reinforce vocab with lists for memorization out of context. Rather, he makes sure that students read the stories multiple times, and actively produce, modify words and forms. When a new word appears, BP will describe it with a Latin phrase, synonym, or act it out. English equivalent is a last resort. In listening to class discussion, it is clear that students have a solid grasp of the vocabulary. They come up with English translations on their own. BP says it has been two years since he has had students learn memorize) vocabulary out of context. This big because it is a real dedication to CLC and the reading approach, which de-emphasizes vocab lists. It is also a rejection of the common approach of most Latin teachers. Also, BP makes sure students know all vocab in CLC (not just the checklist words, which he pretty much ignores)), which helps to bring students' vocabulary to a decent number.

Rather, students read the stories many times. HW is generally three times. Normally, students silently read in class one more time, and then they read along while BP reads and explains new words and concepts in Latin. The students read aloud together, and then are required to use the new vocab in written and oral exercises. Homework is often a continuation or expansion of these exercises, ensuring that students will know

what to do when they get home, as they have already practiced it in class. This means that students are reading a chapter story at least 6 or more times. Students are invited to keep a personal dictionary in their binders. Only a few do this.

Differentiation:

One Latin 2 student is easily distracted and attempts to disrupt the class. He transferred in from another school, and is somewhat resistant to BP's approach. On Thursday at the end of class, BP took him aside, and asked him to write up a translation of the story for Monday. BP said the student responds well to these assignments, and that translation should be used when other approaches do not work as well.

Three students in Latin 1, sophomores, are very motivated, and at the beginning of the year asked if they could read ahead. Within a few months, they said they had finished the first book. BP promptly issued them the second book and told them to continue. They then asked "what if we finish this book?" BP: "then I'll give you the next book. What do you want?" The students want to skip Latin 2, in order to get through all 4 years of Latin. After checking with administration, BP told them that this is allowed, so long as they pass the 2nd year final exam. Also they must work with the Latin 1 class, doing all of the exercises and class activities, which is good review in case they missed something while working independently.

Standards:

BP mentioned that he has basically boiled down all of the fifty or so standards mandated by his board certification process to: communication, students producing in the language, and keeping them actively engaged. He will ask himself: Is the lesson communicative? Is there interaction between himself and students, and between students **IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE**? Are students actively using (in speech or writing) the new grammar and vocabulary?

Classroom climate:

Relaxed and comfortable. Students were kept on task, but there is no anxiety over time or covering the material. For most of each class, students are working on their own in groups. BP actually has down time in his classes to talk with me, check email, input grades, etc. Silent reading at the beginning of class allows students to get into the Latin mindset. During this time, BP can take roll and make final preparations for the lesson. Although classes were all between 25 and 31, they did not feel large. BP said he has never felt that a class this size was too big for him to teach in the way he wants to teach. Studies don't show any advantage for small classes until you go below 11, and those advantages may be mitigated by socio-economic factors. BP is accessible to his students, not only because of his demeanor, but because of the organization of his classes: he is not constantly "teaching" so he can have more quality interactions with students in small groups or one-on-one.

Follow-up Q & A from Latin-BestPractices and CambridgeLatin email lists:

K.C. my responses are below your questions.

Bob

1) I was very confused about how the loculamenta work. Mostly it seems as if students place classwork or projects in there, but not homework? How often do they have things

'due' to the loculamenta? What kind of grade is this assigned? Is there a 'random' factor to it all? How often are these portfolio-type things graded? I'd love to understand but I'm kind of failing to see how these work.

[Robertus respondet:] I have used the loculamenta (or portfolios) in a number of ways. At the point in time when John visited my classroom, we were preparing for a performance final exam which our school system requires in addition to a final exam. In short, the PF focuses on demonstrable skills while the final in a fully integrative exam of

knowledge about and skills in the language. Students were placing in the loculamenta items that they were producing in class that would, when I returned them, help them see what kinds of skills they actually are capable of, and as a kind of study aid for the performance final. Students got quiz grades for the work they completed and place in their loculamenta. I had them write inside the folder cover each item, date, and a short description of what it was.

2) I knew (from the 'modified stage tests') that most of Bob's tests work in Latin almost exclusively. I didn't realize his classroom questioning did, as well. When do you introduce these things to students? I.e., at what stage do you begin to ask comprehension questions in Latin? How do they learn the question words?

[Robertus respondet:] I start working with question words and q and a in Latin from the beginning, though, it's very, very simple in the beginning. As I mentioned before, all question words go on the wall

the first week of school, and as I use them, I point to them (English is up for each one, too, for a while). A really good way to think of how to approach this is to look at the model sentences at the beginning of each stage--you can ask a who, or a what question for each one, and the model sentence becomes the answer. It's that's simple, and it communicates--which is the point. This leads into part of my response for your next question.

3) I'm totally amazed at how everyone 'thinks' in Latin in Bob's classroom. I can't 'think' in Latin very well when I try. Did you have some kind of special training, Bob? Anyway, my kids know by the delay that I'm thinking in Latin when I try in the classroom. ;)

[Robertus respondet:] I have had to go and find training for myself as part of a commitment to work in Latin the way I have or would in other languages. I had a really good Spanish program at the university level.

It made me realize (I was working on my major in Spanish

while I was teaching Latin for the first two or three years--(17 years ago) that Latin could be taught as a language and that Latin most often was not taught as a language but as a code to break. The "training" that I gave myself was the *conventiculum* at U of Kentucky one summer, and then the next summer the *Rusticatio* sponsored by SALVI. Both were incredible helps to me in developing some foundation for speaking and teaching in Latin. Since then, I've done workshops with Stephen Krashen, with the Rassias Institute, and readings in TPR and TPRS. My next goal is to actually attend a TPRS national conference and/or local workshop. I just bought the Fluency Fast DVD from TPRS folks. This one is in French. My aim is to develop a Fluency Fast model for Latin. In short, a Fluency Fast workshop is a 3-4 day workshop that sends the participants out speaking and reading the target language with a working

vocabulary of about 300 words. In 4 days! That's about the same working vocabulary as a year in CLC. What if such a workshop were available to Latin teachers (first!) and then Latin students? What if Latin teachers taught a Fluency Fast course the first week or so of school and had their Latin I students speaking and reading 300 or so words of Latin after the first week of school?

It can be done. The TPRS folks are doing it in many languages. Their reading in target language is through the roof. Their AP scorers in target language go up. Their retention rates at upper levels are very high. All this to say--we need training. Our classics departments have not and are not going to do this for us. We have to do this for ourselves BECAUSE it is good for our students.

After all that, I will tell you that my Latin I students don't think much about the fact that they are thinking in latin. They

just do it.

How would they know that it's not "normal"? :)

4) I often use random assignments to mix up groups when I use them. I noticed that the 'mind map' lesson seemed to get bogged down b/c of the groupings. What is the best way to assign groups? I feel like when I have small classes, the students can only be grouped so many ways.

[Robertus respondet:] Good question. I am prone to random grouping, or at least if I am selecting to make sure the grouping is heterogenous.

However, my own thinking is that if I did some skill and ability groupings, and then created lesson plans that were more differentiated, students might get more out of the group work. It's an issue I am working on.

5) Thanks for this excellent resource! I know I have more questions, but I'd like to get a few things firmed up first. Thanks, John & Bob for bringing up this unique discussion.

[Robertus respondet:] John did all the work here. He's helped create some really good conversations about pedagogy.

Bob

Mike,
My responses interspersed below.

Bob

--- In latin-bestpractices@yahoogroups.com, "michael stewart"

<michaelstewart@...> wrote:

>

>

> Q1: When BP says, "You will hear the story 3x", is he referring to

> the 'whole' story or the summaries/pictures? If the whole story, when

> is that done? (JP later writes that students encounter story at least

> 6x, which makes me lean towards the former, but didn't see this in the

> description)

You are right. What they are encountering is the pictures and sentences that go with them. What I did was "reduce" the entire story to what I considered to be the 5 most important ideas, movements, actions, etc. They were whole, complete sentences, and together with pictures summarize the story. It's a very handy way of introducing a story before students taken on the whole thing, and I think makes the whole thing less intimidating. That's because every 5 or six lines, they meet a sentence they've already seen, and it gives context and shape to the sentences they have not seen.

>

- > Q2: What dictation are the students copying? The 'whole' story or
- > the sentences? How do they correct their papers? Is any answer key
- > put on the overhead? or does BP go over the story again?

They are taking as dictation the sentences that go with

the pictures.

They check their own work with an overhead of those sentences.