Part B:

1. How would you respond to a teacher who says, “Well, if I follow the SIOP Model and make sure my English learners are able to access content using these activities, techniques, and approaches, my on-level kids and native English speakers will be bored.”

- Do you agree with this statement? Why/why not? What supports your position?
- How can teachers with only a few English learners in their classrooms organize instruction so that all students’ needs are met?

A. I can say, without hesitation, that I do not agree with the statement above. During my enrollment in the ELED program my professors and mentor teachers have expressed, modeled, and proven the effectiveness of using the SIOP components/elements in several different classroom environments where a variety of learning needs needed to be met. Because of this exposure to “good teaching” I believe that if you implement these strategies during your daily instruction, student success will increase in the academic and social arena. What makes SIOP such an essential part of teaching is the constant interaction involving teacher/student and student/student. Vygotsky spoke of the importance of interaction when presenting his view on the sociocultural theory. He expressed how society and culture effect learning and students obtain knowledge through interaction (whole, small, and buddy groups), private speech, and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Another way of looking at this is to imagine the structure of a tree. The base/roots are where foundational scaffolding occurs. The information is given by the teacher to the student (input). You then move upward to the branches which is where you find i+1. The i represents what the student has obtained from the teacher and the +1 is then taking the knowledge up a notch (input). If students are unsure of the information presented (formative/summative assessment), the teacher can reteach (review some/all of content, vocabulary, or both) and continue from there. Once students have mastered i+1 then they progress to the leaves of ZPD. Here the student becomes an independent learner (their aha moment) and asks questions to further their knowledge on their own. The cycle of development then repeats with each new concept and this cycle is what every student (ELL, SPED, or high level learner) at some point will experience. This is what SIOP is all about. In the components of SIOP we have the students interact with the teacher and other student. We also have students obtain this knowledge by closing their knowledge gaps with the use of such things as manipulatives, visual aids, repetition, feedback, and connections to previous content explored. If you think about it, these theories and concepts parallel with SIOP which is what good teaching is all about.

B. As stated above SIOP can benefit all students and shouldn’t just be used for the purpose of instructing English learners. There are several ways that a teacher could organize instruction for the benefit of all the students in the class. An example would be when a
new content concept is introduced it is essential that the all students understand what they will be exploring during the lesson. One way to make sure to meet the needs of all students is to share the content and language objective in several different ways. It needs to be visually present in the room during the lesson and having the students verbally recite the objectives increases the chance of understanding and question asking. I would go a bit further by having a brief open discussion allowing students to express their interpretation of the objectives, ask for clarification of any terminology, and to make sure they know the what end result is expected. From there you have the students engage in a series of activities that activate background knowledge of life experiences and prior learning all the while reviewing important concepts during the entire lesson. This can be accomplished with activities that include different groupings such as whole, small, and buddy groups and during these different activities the teacher can move about the room assessing students understanding of the material. The teacher can then decide if +1 can be applied, if there is information needing to be retaught to the entire class, or if reteaching can be accomplished in a small group setting. It can also include manipulatives and visuals to solidify the information for the students and also helps those with different learning styles. The activities can include a variety such as gallery walks, think-pair-share, and whole group white board response. Throughout the implementation of SIOP you see Vygotsky’s theory that interaction with adults and students are key components to learning. You can also see our tree that has scaffolding (teacher based information), i+1 (scaffolding & taking it up a notch), and ZPD (the student asking questions to increase knowledge on their own). All of these strategies and more are what SIOP is all about and will benefit those few English learners as well as their classmates.

2. A factual question a teacher might ask based on social studies text: “Who was the first president of the United States?” Given the topic of the presidency, what are several additional questions you could ask to at promote higher-order thinking? List three (3). Why is it important to use variety of questioning strategies with English learners?

1. What were some of the reasons why the country felt they needed a president? If you agree with their reasoning explain why?
2. What qualities did George Washington have that inspired the public to vote him into office?
3. What qualities do you feel would be necessary for our present day president to have? Why do you feel these are necessary?

A variety of probing questions promotes deeper thinking and further investigation. You want to make sure that the questions cannot be answered with a simple yes/no or few word reply. These higher-order thinking questions activate student engagement. The students are taking what they have learned and are now having the information taken up a notch, but along with this the students are adding what Swain added to Krashen’s theory and that is the output. They have the
opportunity to verbalize and internalize their deeper thoughts and ideas on the subject matter with each additional probing question.

3. **Compare and contrast** the following two teachers’ approaches to teaching a lesson on nutrition.

   a. One teacher’s approach involves a lecture, a diagram of the USDA’s Food Plate, and a list of appropriate foods for each group. Students are then tested about their knowledge of the percentage of each food type they should eat at a meal.
   
   b. The other teacher’s approach begins with students’ maintaining a food diary for a week. Copies of the Food Plate are distributed and explained, and all students must analyze their food consumption according to the national recommendations. With a partner, students must design nutritionally sound weekly menu for each day of the following week, and they must be prepared to defend their food choices to peer group members.

   - Which approach to teaching this content concept is most appropriate for English learners? How do you know? Be specific as you can.

   While looking at both approaches I did notice that both teachers were giving their students pertinent information about the USDA’s Food Plate. That’s about where the similarities end. Teacher A based her lesson on lecture and individual work. You see that there is no mention of class or group discussions and it reminds me of a lesson that Dr. Petersen would have described as a drill and kill method to teaching a subject. The students received a lecture, a diagram, and a list of foods in each group to memorize for the test to be given.

   Teacher B, on the other hand, shows SIOP implementation throughout the lesson. The students are asked to keep a running record of food consumption (making the information pertinent to their lives). Then the students are asked to think deeper by comparing their food consumption to that of the national recommendations. The teacher then has students work in teams (student interaction) to draft a nutritionally sound weekly menu for each day and takes it up a notch by having them follow their menu for one week followed by a peer review of their work (which will give them the opportunity to verbalize and internalize their findings) which they will be required to defend if needed. With each task they are reviewing the objective and the information given in the beginning, followed by higher-order thinking strategies to prepare for possible peer group question rebuttal.

   When teaching content to English Language Learners it is important to give them the necessary support needed for their academic success. This needs to include the use of audio/verbal, visual, and kinesthetic learning techniques that will enhance their learning process. It will allow all students to use their best learning style available to them to understand the information being presented (multiple intelligence). Also English learners need additional support because they are dealing with language obstacles that can impede their learning. By allowing the students to participate in several kinds of learning scenarios that allow them to
increase content knowledge, the students are able absorb and store that information for future objectives while practicing and building their language skills. It’s like Dr. Child and many others have said, you need to have them engaged 90-100% of the time and during that time there needs to be student interaction. In other words we want the teaching to be student centered (as seen in teacher B’s lesson) rather than teacher centered (seen in teacher A’s lesson) and with that you need to gradually release the learning to the students. I had the opportunity during my second semester practicum to watch a fellow student give a lesson on this specific topic. She was teaching in a classroom that had three ELL students and her teaching technique was very similar to teacher B. Her lesson included the students receiving information on the topic, having visuals to refer back to during the lesson, having students monitor their food intake for a week, plotting it on a graph, discussing the finding with other students, and finally producing a food menu that would be more healthy and explaining why. It took two weeks to complete, but when it was done all of her students were well informed about the importance of good eating habits and we saw several of them implement their new food menu into their school lunch. For these reasons I feel that teacher B’s way of teaching the content was much more effective and productive for all of her students.

4. How does a teacher determine whether a majority of student, including English learners, are engaged throughout the period? What techniques could be used to sustain engagement throughout the period? What should the teacher do if he/she senses that students are off task? Why is sustained engagement so critical to English learners’ academic progress?

a. As stated above, engagement needs to be seen with all students between 90-100% of the time during each lesson for valuable student centered learning to happen. One way teachers can calculate student engagement is by assessing the overall classroom atmosphere during the time of each lesson. If you have students out of their seats, chatting with their neighbors off topic, zoning out, or even starting to fall asleep you do not have your classroom engaged. Another engagement monitoring tool is the use of formative and summative assessments to gauge appropriate student participation throughout the lesson/lessons.

b. Techniques that can be used to sustain engagement need to be activated from the introduction of the content/language objectives to the final review of all information presented/discussed. This means that the information must be comprehensible for all students and that the learning about to commence is student centered, but teacher guided/monitored. During this time students need to continually take part in engaging activities that cause them to discuss, probe, and ponder the lesson content. They also need the opportunity of making the information relevant to them and this is achieved by the students connecting what is being taught to their past life and/or learning experiences. Some techniques that can be used to activate and sustain their engagement can include incorporating the use of graphic organizers (KWL), think-pair-share, group gallery walks,
white board responses, and varied group configurations to promote rich/deep thinking discussions.

c. During these activities the teacher must constantly monitor the progress of each student in each setting in order to sense if students are off task. This will require constant movement about the room with eyes and ears probing for key points suggesting that the students are focused and accomplishing the task at hand. There will be times when discussion can lose momentum and/or become sidetracked due to a lack of participation or a lack of ideas. This is when the teacher will need to intervene with such techniques as reviewing objectives posted for lesson, or reactivating a discussion by introducing a concept possibly missed by the group (possibly using higher order thinking questions), or it may just need the teacher briefly becoming a part of the activity to redirect students back to the task (teacher/student interaction reactivating student/student interaction) and could even require the teacher. Whatever technique is needed, the key is to constantly monitor student progress during the lesson so that teachers can discover early on when students are becoming disinterested or off task and direct them back to their current path of learning.

d. Sustained engagement for English learners’ is a vital to their success and academic advancement. Much like a student with special needs, the ELL student comes into the school system needing sustained engagement and multiple exposures of the content to optimize learning and retention. With the techniques discussed it increases the chance that all students, including ELL’s, will be given every opportunity to attain the information needed to succeed in their academic professional life.

5. Think of a content concept that you might be teaching. Describe three different grouping configurations that could be used for teaching and learning this concept. How would you organize the member of each group? How would you monitor student learning? What would you want students to do while working in their groups? How would be grouping configurations facilitate learning for ELs?

a. This semester I will be teaching math concepts that include multiplication and division of fractions. I have decided that in order to have sustained engagement with my entire class I will first work the introductory section of each of my lessons in whole group with periodical two person discussions (grouping level 4&2 and 3&1 together) where they can express their understanding and ideas about the content as well as question their partner in areas they feel are vague. This will activate interest and catch everyone’s attention. From there, if all questions are satisfied, I will move into small table groups that include students in all four learning levels and make sure that sure that my ELL students are placed learning level appropriate with English support either offered by a fellow student or if needed a translator provided by the school. I want different learning level students combined to help them all
attain the content information, but also give them the opportunity to take what they are learning up to the next level. If I were to put all my low level learners and ELL students together there is a high risk of their engagement stalling and with that learning will no longer take place. With learning levels being evenly distributed amongst the groups, there is a much high chance for success and progress for all involved.

b. Once my grouping strategies are in place I will then organize what formative assessments I will use throughout the entire lesson to monitor comprehension. This will include such techniques as listening to student response during varied group configured discussions, the input of periodic questions during activities to gauge if any students need more explicit tier 2 or 3 instruction, and group writing prompts and presentations that would allow them to express their collaborated understanding of the material.

c. While students are working in their groups there needs to be specific jobs that each will hold for a certain period of time so that all students are involved and contributing in finding the answers to the questions presented. With each question the role that each student plays will be changed so that they all experience every facet of the problem solving process. There will be one student who will present the group findings, one student that will record what will be presented, and the final two students arranging the manipulatives being used to support their findings. Even though they each have a job to do, they will also be required to assist their fellow groupies in the solving of each problem.

d. The group configurations shared above will facilitate each ELL student’s learning by having them continuously engaged in i+1 activities while at the same time knowing that they are in a safe learning environment with backup support from their peers and teacher when they get stuck.