
SIFT + RHETORICAL READING

Reading laterally across the web

A guided source investigation

ENGL C1001 • Monday, October 12



Reading anchor: “How to Tame a Wild Tongue”

Chapter 5 gives us a question to carry into research:

Who gets to decide which language counts as “correct”?

Anzaldúa writes about language policing, identity, gender, voice, and belonging. A policy source can add context, but it cannot establish her experience or replace her argument.



Shared source: ProEnglish on bilingual education

ProEnglish: Bilingual Education

Claim to investigate

“California in 1998 gave 60% voter approval to the change.”



Our question

What does “the change” mean? How can we check the vote?

SIFT: four moves for investigating a source

S

STOP

Pause at a claim that matters.

I

INVESTIGATE

Who made this, and what is their role?

F

FIND

Look for useful coverage elsewhere.

T

TRACE

Follow a claim back to its source.

Choose checks that fit the question and the stakes.

S + I: identify the claim and investigate ProEnglish

S

STOP

What exact claim are we checking?

I

INVESTIGATE

Who publishes this page?

What is ProEnglish's stated purpose?

Think aloud

“ProEnglish advocates for official English and against bilingual education. That tells me its position. I still need to check the factual claims on this page.”

Search: ProEnglish mission

Find the 1998 language vote; trace the official result

FIND

Google this phrase

California language education act 1998

If needed, add “1998 vote” to narrow the results.

TRACE

Open the official election result?

Who published it? What percent voted yes? Does it match 60%?

Check the statewide total.

The vote record verifies the number; it does not show which teaching approach works best.

What the official result tells us

California's official results show that 60.88% voted yes in June 1998.

What this confirms

ProEnglish's rounded 60% vote figure is accurate.

What this does not confirm

A vote shows what voters approved; it does not prove which teaching approach works best.
Any changes after 28years?

Class prompt

What did the official result verify—and what remains unverified?

California propositions on language instruction

California voters later changed the rules for how districts could teach English learners.

Proposition 227 • 1998

Required English learners to be taught in English, generally through English immersion.

Proposition 58 • 2016

Repealed key restrictions from Prop 227. Districts gained more choice, including bilingual programs, with community input.

What changed?

Prop 58 removed the English-only mandate. Schools still had to help students learn English.

Who gets to decide what counts as “correct”?

What SIFT helped us verify

California voters approved Proposition 227 in 1998. The official result confirms 60.88% voted yes. Proposition 58 later changed those rules.

What we can conclude

Voters can shape language-education policy. This evidence does not show that voters alone decide which language counts as “correct.”

What remains to research

Teachers, families, school districts, policymakers, and language communities may also shape language standards. A broader search belongs in another course. Today, we practiced using SIFT to verify one claim as part of a larger research question.

Exit reflection

Before you cite an online source, ask:

- 01 What claim am I checking?
- 02 Who made this, and what is their purpose?
- 03 What official source can I use to check the claim?

Carillo & Horning • ProEnglish: Bilingual Education • California Secretary of State: 1998 Primary Election Results

Thank You !

Could you spare a minute to fill out this quick feedback form?

<https://tinyurl.com/bdhy9v93>

