

Teachers Working with ELL Students

Definition of English Language Learner

An English Language Learner (ELL) is someone who:

- Was not born in the United States and whose native language is not English; or
- Comes from a home where a language other than English is spoken exclusively; or
- Comes from a home where a language other than English is commonly spoken; or
- For the above reasons, has difficulty using English in school to the extent that he or she is unable to learn successfully in classrooms where English is the only language of instruction

What ELL Students Want Classroom Teachers **TO DO**

1. Speak more slowly, simplify your language.
2. Give notes and more examples, write legibly, demonstrate and use manipulatives.
3. Write notes on the board or overhead or write key words/phrases. List and review instructions step-by-step.
4. Give study guides.
5. Provide ELL students with teacher's notes.
6. Explain words and use vocabulary with definitions in simple language. Recognize that students will make language mistakes.
7. Pair the ELL student with another student who can assist.
8. Provide support groups for language minority students, Develop a student-centered approach to teaching and learning.
9. Give time during a test to ask for clarification of word meaning.
10. Allow the use of books and notes during a test if necessary.
11. Give extended time if there is an extremely big assignment.
12. Remember that more explanation and information may be needed.
13. Remember that some ELL students must translate twice in their head while taking notes (from English to the first language and then back to English).
14. Adapt the materials.
15. Support the students' home languages and cultures; bring them into the classroom.

The easiest kinds of lessons are those where

- We get lots of vocabulary and time to define the words before the lesson.
- The teacher gives us specific instructions for each assignment.
- The teacher has an outline for the lesson and gives it to us before the class period.
- The teacher makes copies of his notes and gives them to us prior to the lesson (It really helps if we can follow the notes as the teacher lectures.)
- We demonstrate our comprehension using alternative forms of assessment.

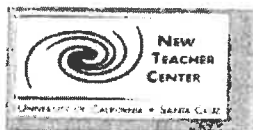
The hardest kinds of lessons for us are

- Straight lecture. It is most difficult to hear English and have to take notes at the same time.
- Taking notes from a video.
- Being assigned a chapter to read in class and having to answer the questions from the reading in one class period.
- Being assessed by traditional methods that do not always measure our comprehension.

Other students in class can help us by

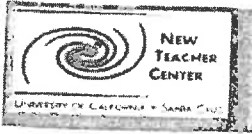
- Just explaining answers when we ask for help.
- Accepting us for who we are and where we come from.

Remember: Don't ask me, "Do you understand?" I'll probably say "Yes" whether I do or not. Perhaps you should say, "Show me that you understand by ..."



Accelerating Academic Language Development
Six Key STRATEGIES for
Teachers of English Learners

<p align="center">Strategy #1 <u>Vocabulary & Language Development</u></p> <p>Content knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce new concepts via essential academic vocabulary. • Connect student-accessible synonyms or concepts to these essential vocabulary. • Support students to distinguish word meanings, & their uses for subject-specific tasks & prerequisite language skills. <p>Academic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage beginning-level students in using basic social & school vocabulary, phrases, & sentence structures. • As students progress, continue to contextualize instruction of more complex language forms & uses: subject-specific academic vocabulary, grammatical forms, & sentence structures used in listening, speaking, reading & writing. • Respectfully distinguish differences between primary language use & standard academic English. <p>Sample activities/assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Word analysis: e.g., dissecting words into their parts (prefix, root, suffix). ✓ Vocabulary journals, A-B-C books, word webs, word walls. ✓ Interactive editing, Cloze paragraphs, dictations, subject-specific journals. 	<p align="center">Strategy #2 <u>Guided Interaction</u></p> <p>Content knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure multiple opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions as they learn content & develop their use of academic language in speaking/listening, reading & writing. • Clarify expectations, outcomes, & procedures related to tasks for flexible group activities. • Allow for primary language interactions to clarify concepts. <p>Academic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure multiple opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions to increase speaking, listening, reading comprehension & writing skills. • Support language interactions with review/preview of language forms, use of graphic organizers or other types of modeling. <p>Sample activities/assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Partner interviews, Class surveys, Tea Party, Think-Pair-Share, Numbered Heads Together, Four Corners. ✓ Poster projects, group presentations. ✓ Perspective line-ups. ✓ Readers' Theatre. ✓ (See <i>Metacognition & Authentic Assessment</i> activities.) 	<p align="center">Strategy #3 <u>Metacognition & Authentic Assessment</u></p> <p>Content knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach students processes for metacognition: i.e., pre-reading & pre-writing skills, word analysis, & methods to monitor their reading comprehension. • Teach & model ways for students to describe their thinking processes verbally & in writing. • Use a variety of activities & tasks to check for understanding. <p>Academic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to components listed above, ensure that assessment tasks are appropriate to students' assessed language development level. • Provide enough time to complete tasks, appropriate feedback, rubrics, & models to guide students' self-assessment. <p>Sample activities/assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Guided reading, completing chapter pre-reading guides, reciprocal teaching, Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA), Anticipation Guides, double-entry journals. ✓ Think-alouds, K-W-L. ✓ Learning logs/journals, quick-writes.
<p>Activities I use for this strategy:</p>	<p>Activities I use for this strategy:</p>	<p>Activities I use for this strategy:</p>



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<p align="center">Strategy #4 <u>Explicit Instruction</u></p>	<p align="center">Strategy #5 <u>Meaning-Based Context & Universal Themes</u></p>	<p align="center">Strategy #6 <u>Modeling, Graphic Organizers, & Visuals</u></p>
<p>Content knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach essential grade-level concepts & build students' background knowledge as needed. • Connect overarching ideas (whole), then examine components or processes (part), culminating with students' own applications or synthesis of ideas (new whole). • Explicitly teach academic language & cognitive reading skills needed to complete subject-specific tasks, e.g., analyze, interpret, classify, compare, synthesize, persuade, solve. <p>Academic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach essential language forms & uses per students' assessed language development level: listening/speaking, reading & writing. • Follow contextualized introduction & explicit modeling of language use with repeated practice. <p>Sample activities/assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teach/explain prerequisite language applications: reading directions, idioms, sentence starters, essay formats, pattern drills, or completing a story map; check for understanding. ✓ Teach specific reading comprehension skills for completing: task procedures, answering questions, word problems, understanding text & graphics. 	<p>Content knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce new concepts through familiar resources, prompts, visuals, or themes. • Use associated types of "realia" meaningful or familiar to students to affirm the appropriate context for using new language. • Sustain motivation to learn challenging concepts by linking ideas to resources or contexts that reflect student interests & sociocultural or linguistic backgrounds. <p>Academic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use methods listed above for introducing academic vocabulary, sentence structures, & language uses. • Link ongoing language practice or tasks to both school-based & community-based uses. • Respectfully compare & analyze language use, & meanings to other cultures or context, to promote metacognition. <p>Sample activities/assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quick-write responses or recording student responses to visuals, current event stories, real-life models, video clips, teacher read-alouds, thematic prompts, role-play, comparing language uses for similar contexts. ✓ Identifying & analyzing different perspectives & language references re: essential concepts. 	<p>Content knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model how to complete tasks. • Provide graphic organizers & meaningful visuals to support students' recognition of essential information. • Use graphic organizers to support understanding of specific tasks, & specific uses of academic language. • Use advanced organizers to support metacognition, & overall comprehension. <p>Academic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use methods listed above with the addition of word banks, word walls, & modeling the use of graphic organizers appropriate to ELD level. • Appropriately modulate language delivery, i.e., speed & enunciation, when modeling language forms or presenting content; repetition helps. <p>Sample activities/resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Venn diagrams, story maps, main idea + supporting detail schematics, double-entry journals, semantic attribute matrices. ✓ Jazz chants, read-alouds.
<p>Activities I use for this strategy:</p>	<p>Activities I use for this strategy:</p>	<p>Activities I use for this strategy:</p>

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Instructional Strategies for ESL Students Checklist

Checking students' comprehension of the content:

- Use sentence strips
- Set up dialogue journals between teacher and student
- Plan activities using role play and drama
- Use student reading logs
- Use Cloze exercises
- Write summaries
- Encourage students to write headlines
- Write character diaries
- Have students present information with illustrations, comic strips, or other visual representations
- Allow students to provide answers and explain processes instead of you telling them

Helping ESL students adjust to the classroom:

- State / display language, content and metacognitive objectives
- List instructions / process steps and review orally
- Present information in varied ways (oral, written, demonstrations, with tangible objects)
- Frequently summarize key points
- Repeat and paraphrase important terms
- Provide Word Wall with vocabulary for unit / chapter
- Have students maintain notebook
- Have student maintain learning log for metacognitive strategies
- Allow sufficient response time
- **Adjusting teaching style:**
- Develop a student centered approach
- Speak a little more slowly (not louder ☺), use shorter sentences, and avoid idioms
- Increase the percentage of inferential and higher order thinking questions
- Provide correction for language errors by modeling, not overt correction

Teaching a multi level class:

- Use cooperative learning
- Incorporate peer tutoring
- Use the Writing Process
- Explicitly connect learning to students' knowledge and experience
- Take time to preview and explain new concepts and vocabulary before starting instruction
- Use questionnaires / interviews

Motivating students and providing background knowledge:

- Use Semantic Webbing and graphic organizers
- Use Anticipation Reaction Guides
- Have students brainstorm, then record responses on overhead before starting lessons
- Use KWL charts
- Use realia, maps, photos, and manipulatives
- Do activities where students can interact and move around

Adapting ESL techniques to the content classroom:

- Have students do hands-on activities
- Do demonstrations
- Use CDs, cassettes and videotapes with books
- Use a variety of groupings so that ESL students can interact with different classmates (not only the Spanish speaking ones!)
- Provide students with outline of lesson and questions that will be asked beforehand so they have an opportunity to process information and participate more readily
- The overhead projector is your best friend - use it every day to model highlighting text, identifying main ideas or new vocabulary or to show pictures.

Instructional Strategies A-Z
26 Strategies for Teaching ESL in the Content Areas

A	Analogies - Have students create their own examples or analogies when trying to understand and remember a general concept or vocabulary definition. This not only helps students remember the concept better, but also helps them check their own understanding.
B	Bilingual Benefits - Being bilingual leaves students with more flexibility in thinking, greater sensitivity to language, and a better ear for listening, gives the child a head start in language requirements for college, increases job opportunities in many careers, and gives a child the ability to communicate with people he or she would otherwise not have had the chance to know.
C	Cooperative Group Activity-Based Classrooms - ESL students succeed in activity-centered classes because of two main factors: 1) students have regular opportunities for extended discourse; and 2) students are highly motivated because they use the target language in situations of personal choice.
D	Differentiate Instruction - provide opportunities for visual, verbal linguistic, and tactile kinesthetic learners to apply their strength when learning. It means all students will not be doing the same activity in the same way all of the time.
E	Explain Expectations - Students need to be aware in advance of how they will be evaluated. To familiarize students with your expectations, do an in-class practice activity similar to the assessment, then show students how they will be evaluated. Students can work in pairs or groups during practice. Rubrics and checklists will help clarify expectations.
F	Find Key Words - To learn this list of reasons why an event in history occurred, show students how to pick out a key word for each reason and then learn just the key words.
G	Goal Setting - assist limited English proficient students in your classroom in setting personal goals for language acquisition. Make sure they learn in a proper balance; about 60% nouns, 30% verbs, and 10% adjectives and prepositions.
H	Honor the Student's Native Language - Encourage English speaking while reinforcing the value of the learner's native tongue. Never let the student feel ashamed of his or her native language or culture, and model that respect for your students.
I	Integrate Instruction - integrated learning is beneficial for all students, especially ESL learners. The ability to connect learning in one subject area to learning in another increases retention by increasing transfer.
J	Justify Why, How and When - Show your students the 'how', 'when' and 'why' to use language learning strategies, and to evaluate and monitor their own learning. - Preview teaching material and activities to identify strategies for instruction - Present strategy by naming it and explaining when and why to use it - Model the strategy Provide opportunities to practice the strategy with various activities/tasks - Develop students' ability to evaluate strategy use Develop skills to transfer strategy use to new tasks (Adapted from Scope and Sequence Frameworks for Learning Strategy Instruction in O'Malley & Chamot, 1995, pp. 158-9)
K	Know Student's Learning Styles - use a learning styles inventory or observation to discover the learning style or multiple intelligence in which each student has a dominant strength. Use that knowledge to prescribe the best learning options for the student, and let students know the results so they will know the best ways for them to study.
L	Learn Their Language - Students will relax and feel comfortable in your classroom if you make an effort to learn their vocabulary. Simply asking ESL student show to say words or phrases in their native tongue can increase trust and empathy on both sides.
M	Memory Techniques - Have students learn how to group items into categories in order to memorize them. If they have a long list of things to memorize, show them how to group similar

	items together or to use anagrams for memory recall.
N	No Busy Work - Set reasonable goals for the material your English language learners should be responsible for. Be sure it is relevant. Adapt tests if necessary to fairly assess what your students should be able to do. There is no point in their memorizing a list of spelling words, for example, if they do not understand what the words mean.
O	Oral Summaries, Outlines, Venn Diagrams, and Mind Maps - should be used to assist ESL learners. Teachers should try to use visual reviews with lists and charts; paraphrase the salient points where appropriate; and have students provide oral summaries themselves.
P	Promote and Practice the Power of Patterns - know the basic language patterns for the second language and know how they compare to English patterns. Give students opportunities to recognize and practice the patterns.
Q	Quit Talking So Much - ESL learners improve their fluency when they have opportunities to speak. Pair and share activities after a brief teacher talk will help ESL learners to check their comprehension with a buddy.
R	Retroactivity and Repetition - use both to increase language proficiency. Repetition is how many times you repeat something in a given time period, retroactivity is how long you use and apply it from when you initially learned it. Return to vocabulary from previous units and give students a chance to apply those terms in a new instructional topic. Just like in physical exercise, the number of repetitions and the retroactivity increase strength.
S	Six Facets of Understanding - in order for learners to deeply understand a topic, it must be experienced from all six facets. Learners should be able to Explain, Apply, Interpret, and also gain Empathy, Perspective and Self-knowledge.
T	Think Aloud - Use "think-out-loud" modeling. "Listen to me think out loud". Take a "tour" of a reading selection showing students how you scan the text first looking at pictures, graphics, and titles. Share the questions you have about the text before you begin reading.
U	Use Visuals and Graphic Organizers - to support ESL students' efforts at reading lengthy sections of text, graphic organizers can aid in identifying the important information you want them to find. Break lengthy sections down and have student group discussions between the shorter text segments. Teach students to visualize what they're trying to learn. Have them create a mental image or organize information on a graphic organizer.
V	Value Diversity - demonstrate an interest in and support of students whose background differs from your own. Know the strengths that accepting diversity has to offer us as a nation. Share those benefits with your students.
W	Written Compositions - allow students to write a first draft in their native tongue to get a fluency and cohesiveness of ideas. While other students are revising and editing, ESL students can translate into English. Babelfish is a good online resource to assist students in translating http://babelfish.altavista.com/babelfish/tr
X	Xperiment (Encourage Experimentation) - a child needs to experiment and produce utterances that may be inaccurate yet reflect normal language development. In this way, the child is attempting to figure out the patterns and rules that govern the language. To correct the child's speech, grammar or spelling, teachers should rephrase or expand on what the child has already said or written. Feedback from peers will also help the children determine correct from incorrect ways of communicating. They test these chunks of language by using them in situations that may or may not be appropriate. The feedback they receive helps them determine whether they have guessed correctly. Positive feedback works best.
Y	Youth Role Models - for each subpopulation, know the leaders in your community that have been successful transitioning into the American culture speaking English. Involve them in your classroom for the benefit of all students. Students older, but closer to their age will have a greatest impact. High school students could visit elementary classrooms as role models, and college students or graduates can greatly impact current high school students.

Z

Zeal for Higher Order Thinking - teachers must create opportunities to focus on thinking skills including predicting, categorizing, generalizing and making inferences which are easily addressed in the warm-up and motivation phases of a lesson; observing, reporting and classifying, which can be done orally, in writing or pictorially, and which fit nicely into presentation and application phases; and sequencing, summarizing and justifying, which fit well in lesson reviews.

(adapted from *How to Integrate Language and Content Instruction*, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1991 by Deborah J. Short)

Helpful websites for teaching ELL

Mississippi Dept. of Education Guidelines for English Language Learners:
www.mde.k12.ms.us/innovative_support/TitleIII/ELLGuidelinesJune07.pdf

Can Do Performance Descriptors:
http://www.wida.us/standards/CAN_DOs

<http://a4esl.org>
www.manvthings.org
www.spellingcity.com
<http://freerice.com>
www.apples4theteacher.com
www.worldbook.com
www.gamequarium.com
www.starfall.com
<http://visual.merriam-webster.com>
www.languageguide.org
<http://languagearts.pppst.com/reading.html>
www.usalearns.org
<http://www.learn-english-online.org/>
<http://www.l-language.com/>
<http://www.colorincolorado.org/sobre>

Accommodations for EL Students

Federal law requires that teachers of second language students provide accommodations and modifications to enable students to succeed in the classroom. These are suggestions only; in your teaching, you may find others that are very effective.

- _____ Give tests orally
- _____ Give instructions/directions in writing and orally
- _____ Assign a buddy, same language or English speaking
- _____ Allow errors in speaking
- _____ Allow errors in writing
- _____ Accept writing in first language
- _____ Highlight key vocabulary
- _____ Reduce amount of work required
- _____ Assess comprehension through demonstration or other alternative means (gestures, drawings)
- _____ Allow open book tests
- _____ For each question, indicate page number in textbook where answer is found
- _____ Rephrase questions, directions, and explanations
- _____ Use group projects rather than individual work
- _____ Reduce multiple choices to two
- _____ Provide study guides and/ or outlines
- _____ Provide video on subject
- _____ Allow extended time for test/project completion
- _____ Use books on tape/CD
- _____ Use reduced text, so that print is not dense
- _____ Adapt homework to reflect language proficiency
- _____ Adapt homework to reflect home support
- _____ Provide hands-on activities and explanations
- _____ Allow extended time to answer questions, and permit drawing, as an explanation
- _____ Accept participation at any level, even one word
- _____ Use of translation dictionaries to locate words in the native language