

# EL Tip of the Week

## Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)

*Basic language skills*

- Topics are concrete and make sense
- Easy to understand everyday language; simple structures
- Takes 1-3 years to achieve

## Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

*Academic language*

- Topics are more abstract and need a certain level of prior knowledge
- Specialized vocabulary and more complex language structure
- Takes at least 5 years to achieve

**THE WAY A STUDENT CONVERSES MAY SUGGEST HE OR SHE IS FLUENT IN ENGLISH; HOWEVER, HIS OR HER TEST SCORES MAY BE LOW. THIS IS BECAUSE ACADEMIC LANGUAGE TAKES TIME TO DEVELOP. ENGLISH LEARNERS WHO “SPEAK” ENGLISH STILL NEED SUPPORT AS THEY ACQUIRE THE ACADEMIC LANGUAGE NECESSARY TO ENSURE SUCCESS WITH CONTENT.**

**[YOUTUBE: BICS VS. CALP](#)**