Ideas for Classroom Teachers of English Language Learners

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- Currently over 10% of US students are ELLs
- By 2026 it is predicted that 1 out of every 4 public school student in the USA will be an English Language Learner
- In Danville we are seeing an increase in our ELL student population each year
- Most classroom teachers have no training in teaching EL students



Ideas for Classroom Teachers:

1. CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS AND BE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE

- Allow students to embrace their native culture and their language as a foundation of who they are
- look at learning English not as subtractive, but as additive to their life
- Think about how is your student feeling in your classroom. Are they sitting next to a buddy they can ask a question? Do they feel comfortable tapping you on the shoulder if they have to go to the bathroom?

2. TEACH LANGUAGE SKILLS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

- English language learners should not be learning English in isolation; they should be applying their developing language skills to academic content in all subjects
- Take time to teach the unfamiliar vocabulary of your subject area. For example, in mathematics teach words such as a*dd, subtract, calculator, solve*—concurrently with the teaching of math skills.
- Plus it is a great review for our other students

3. EMPHASIZE PRODUCTIVE LANGUAGE

- Productive language skills—hard-to-master dimensions of language fluency like speaking and writing—should be front and center from day one, even if students feel hesitant about them
- Beginning ELLs often develop receptive language skills like listening and reading first
- Students who can follow verbal or written directions will be able to produce oral or written language, but that's usually not the case.
- To support reluctant speakers, use sentence frames. For example, when a science teacher wants ELLs to produce a hypothesis, they might offer the sentence, 'If _____ was added, then _____ because _____.'

4. SPEAK SLOWLY—AND INCREASE YOUR WAIT TIME

- Adding in an extra three to five seconds after we pose a question offers all students time to think,
- For ELLs, it also gives time to translate, process their thinking, translate back into English, and develop the courage to answer
- If we call on students too quickly, many of our students will stop thinking about the answers—or trying to answer at all.
- Researchers have found that typically most teachers give one to two seconds between asking a question and expecting a student response,
- The same researchers have shown that if you wait three to five seconds, the quality of responses is astronomically greater.

5. DIFFERENTIATE—AND USE MULTIPLE MODALITIES

- All kids learn better when they engage with material in multiple ways
- Lessons that involve writing, speaking, drawing, and listening give students 4 opportunities to deepen their understanding of the work
- For ELLs, those additional engagements also provide a little breathing room so they can work through the language barrier.

6. INCORPORATE STUDENTS' NATIVE LANGUAGES—AND DON'T BE AFRAID OF TECHNOLOGY

- Bilingualism is the goal, not replacement of the native language
- Use strategies such as "preview, view, review," which leverages a student's native language skills as a foundation for learning the new language. Introduce a topic and encourage students to preview it in materials in their native language, then teach the topic in English, & have students review the information in their native language
- Use Google Translate, or ideas from internet, such as those on reference page

Simple Ways to Support English Learners' Comprehension

1. **A picture is worth a thousand words:**

- For ELs who may not comprehend everything a teacher says, an image will help clarify meaning and encourage understanding.
- Whenever you introduce new vocabulary, couple a picture with each important word. Long or dense texts may be overwhelming to ELs, so including images can boost comprehension and stamina. Consider adding images to assessments or any printed directions for activities.

2. Check for comprehension frequently:

- Often ELs will not tell you when they don't understand something because they don't want their classmates to know.
- Teachers can help by providing a sentence starter or asking them to write down their answer before sharing it.
- Exit tickets are another great way to check student comprehension. Including a sentence starter or picture support on an exit ticket is an easy way to scaffold learning for ELs.
- After giving directions for an activity, check in with ELs and restate the expectations if needed. Model the task if it appears the directions were not sufficient.

Simple Ways to Support English Learners' Comprehension

3. Use sentence and paragraph frames:

- Many ELs struggle to form grammatically correct responses to questions. To address this, provide sentence frames during class discussion.
- For example, if students are asked to give evidence, you can use the sentence frame "I know this because the text says _____."
- If you want students to talk about causes of a historical event, a sentence frame could be: "One cause of (the event) is _____" or (Event) happened because _____."

4. Chunk texts:

- chunk passages into short, manageable sections.
- For each reading, choose two to three key vocabulary words and provide pictures of those items
- Allow ELs to translate the words into their native language if they're unfamiliar with the terms After each chunk of text, ask ELs to write a one-sentence summary of the section using the vocabulary words in their sentence. Then move on to the next section of text.

Methods of instruction recommended by
The National Literacy Panel
and TESOL
(Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

Scaffolding

Multimodal Approach

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)

Concept Attainment Model

Two-Way Content Based Instruction

Co-teaching/Collaboration with ESL Specialist

STRATEGIES to SUPPORT
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

- Speak slower, not louder.
- Provide outlines, advanced organizer, or visual guides.
- Write down key terms on the board.
- Integrate games.
- Read written instructions. Repeat.
- Write key concept vocabulary on a Word Wall.
- Integrate listening centers.
- Model new skills.
- Extend test time.
- Don't rescue ELLs when they struggle to speak - smile, relax your feet, face, and hands, and wait (it's hard to be tense when those body parts are loose).
- Think-pair-share.
- Provide exemplars of successful projects.
- Let students use their home language in the classroom to solve work.
- Use pictures, sketches, and graphic organizers.
- Make videos of presentations for ELLs to replay if needed.
- Liberally use checks for understanding.
- Pair up ELLs with strong oral and written English skills.
- Share a picture glossary.
- Teach with cooperative learning.
- Provide opportunities for low-stakes writing.

More Ideas for Classroom Teachers:

- Use various questioning strategies to promote higher level thinking skills
- Provide sufficient wait time for student responses
- Emphasize key words
- Use appropriate vocabulary for students' proficiency level
- Speak at a rate appropriate for students' proficiency level
- Exaggerate intonation and gestures
- Use short, simple sentences rather than complex ones;
- Avoid pausing before the end of sentences
- Provide frequent opportunities for interaction among students and between teacher and student
- Repeat sentences, without using too many different expressions or changing vocabulary
- Avoid the use of idioms

(Lightbrown & Spada, 2004)

Resources for Teachers:

Your first & best resource at DMS is Alison VanPatter, our EL Program specialist

https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/resources/glossaries

http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/2008/10/03/the-best-multilingual-bilingual-sites-for-math-social-studies-science/

http://www.visualdictionaryonline.com/

http://www.learnersdictionary.com/

https://www.edutopia.org/blog/strategies-and-resources-supporting-ell-todd-finley

https://www.middleweb.com/40107/how-to-teach-them-all-without-sacrificing-rigor/