

# Supports for English Learners During Workshop

The following strategies may be used to adapt your teaching in order to support English Learners during the Reading and Writing Workshop. Teachers should draw on different methods based on students' needs.

## Comprehensible Input

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
<b>Technique Demonstration</b>	Provide a quick demonstration of a key skill or strategy. This lets students see and participate in the step-by-step process used by a proficient reader/writer.	If you are teaching students that readers reread a piece of writing to determine what craft moves are used, instead of say, "Reread this writing and see what craft moves are used," you might instead say, "Will you watch me (or join me) as I reread this writing, noticing what craft moves are used?" Then, you could shift into a demonstration and show students how you read a bit of the writing, and muse aloud about what craft moves were used. You note something in the text, then think aloud, "Huh...that's interesting! It feels like the author is using the same exact words she did earlier. Maybe she's doing that because..."
<b>Accessible Example</b>	Make a concept or strategy clear by giving an especially accessible example.	To teach students to compare and contrast two texts, first help them to compare and contrast an apple and an orange, then ratchet up the task by comparing and contrasting the two photographs, and finally you will move to texts.
<b>+/- Examples</b>	Provide a positive and also a negative example to illustrate a key concept or word, or to explain a strategy.	When introducing a new concept or strategy, you can boost kids' understanding by providing a counterexample. This is often done as a quick aside. You might say, "Will I describe this character by saying, 'She is nice' and that's all? No way! I'll need to be more specific, right? Maybe I'll say, 'She is generous with her things, and she is also enthusiastic about ideas, always game for anything.'"
<b>Consistent Language</b>	Use consistent language (e.g., repeat the teaching point, repeat key terms). It is helpful	This means clarifying among yourselves whether or not terms are synonyms. Is there

	if you use language in consistent ways. It also helps to repeat the teaching point multiple times, in the same language, so that kids come to know it well.	a difference between “evidence,” “example,” “supports” and “reasons,” and if so, what is the difference? If several terms mean the same thing, use them as synonyms when talking with kids. For example, you might say, “It helps to add specifics, to add details.”
<b>Visuals</b>	Use visuals to draw out the most important vocabulary, concepts, and language structures.	Identify key vocabulary, concepts, and language structures that will help students access a particular skill as they read or write. Then, provide a visual support (e.g., pictures, photographs, or videos) that captures the key concept and help demonstrate language forms and functions. Visual word banks (which include a word plus a picture) should be accessible in the classroom environment.
<b>Teaching Point</b>	Restate a key part of the lesson (e.g., the teaching point, a key vocabulary word) in simpler language that helps to make tricky concepts comprehensible.	To teach academic language successfully within a session, it helps to identify critical language that may need to be simplified for some students. While teaching, you can use the trick word, and then provide a synonym or a definition to help students access the academic language. You’ll want to keep you paraphrasing short and concise. This allows students access to the critical work of the session/unit without reducing the rigor of the work and without extending the amount of teacher talk by more than a few seconds.

### **Build on Students’ Prior Knowledge**

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>EXAMPLE</b>
<b>Activating Prior Knowledge</b>	Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge and allow you to build on that knowledge.	Ask students to turn and tell their partner what they’ve learned in a past lesson or in a past unit pertaining to the topic of the day. For instance, when launching a realistic fiction writing unit, you could say, “Will you remind your partner of three things you already learned that are especially important when writing a story?”
<b>Shared Experiences</b>	Teach new content by relying on shared experiences and texts.	In order to help students know that a writer focuses on the most important part of an episode, you might refer to a class field trip and point out that if you were writing about it, you wouldn’t be apt to focus on lining up to get on the bus, but rather on an interesting thing that happened during the field trip.

## Provide Access to Complex, Academic Concepts and Strategies

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
<b>Think Aloud</b>	Use think-aloud strategies to demonstrate your thinking process for students.	When helping students grapple with a challenging concept, it helps to make your thinking visible by saying aloud the language that's in your head so that students can understand the process you are working through. This is especially beneficial when the process is tricky or is new to your students. Your language will literally communicate your thinking, such as: "Hmm...ahh...maybe I should...let me try..."
<b>Structured Language Stems or Frames</b>	Structured language stems provide English Learners with choices and options of how to use language to access and express ideas. Stems are more open-ended than sentence frames; the teacher typically provides a sentence starter that students fill in with their own responses. These language stems give students a place to start, and they allow students to try out the language functions demanded of the genre. Structured language frames help students build more language, such as verb tenses. The frames you use will need to match your students' language needs.	If the kids in the group are writing about a text, the stems might say, "The author shows this...This is important because..." If the students are describing things in a collection, stems such as these could help: "It is...It has...It can..."
<b>Feedback</b>	Provide opportunities for teacher and peers to provide feedback and for students to self-assess.	Checklists and professions, illustrated with examples, can help students identify their strengths and crystallize next steps. This can lead learners to know their strengths and to identify clear goals for themselves. Students learn to internalize criteria for good work by both giving and receiving feedback.  It is also important for students to know next steps. It is helpful if their have concrete goals, especially if those goals are calibrated to be ambitious, yet within reach.
<b>Questioning</b>	Ask questions that you hope students will internalize and later ask of their own texts.	You can ask generalizable questions that you hope students end up internalizing and asking of their own texts. For example, "Why do you think that happened?" or "How do you think that character felt?" or "Why do you think the author might have done that?" If you ask those questions repeatedly, students internalize them and ask those same questions of their own reading and writing.

## Give Opportunities for Structured Oral Language Practice

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
<b>Turn and Talk</b>	Once kids have the structure of think-pair-share internalized, perhaps from guided practice or a graphic organizer, you can ask them “turn and talk.” Turning and talking is especially beneficial for English Learners because it keeps them engaged, gives them time to practice oral language, and supports them in making meaning. To be able to read or write sentence, students need to be able to say them first.	<p>To ensure that partner talk goes well, you might first teach the protocols of “turn and talk” - that partners should turn and face each other, and that when one partner speaks, the other child should make eye contact with him or her and use physical cues to show signs of listening. It helps to establish a signal to begin and end partner talk, so that minilessons stay mini and transitions stay quick.</p> <p>To help partner talk go well, you might assign Partner 1 and Partner 2 roles (and Partner 3 if applicable) to partnerships, and tell students which partner will speak first. Once taking turns is more fluid, partners can decide on the speaking order for themselves, especially if they are older.</p>
<b>Starter Phrases</b>	Provide starter phrases that support skill practice and help to meet language objectives. Starter phrases should be used consistently enough that learners internalize them and begin to generate these phrases on their own, without the support of a list. Adding to the phrases over time allows students to hear and use different language. Usually you will model using a starter phrase before you ask students to use it (or other options on a list of phrases) themselves. Students will also benefit from producing the language first orally before they use it in writing.	It is helpful to provide starter phrases (stems) linked to the language objectives for a particular session, such as: “This makes me think...The thought I have about this is...On the other hand...”
<b>Visuals</b>	Use visual supports to help students say more or understand more in their reading and writing work. It will also help them elaborate more when they write.	To enhance students’ understanding when they read, you might guide them to study the visuals on the page and say what they notice, such as in the setting or in characters’ actions. When students write, you might ask them to produce sketches for a story (or for an information book or opinion piece) to help them add new details and elaborate on their writing.