

Helpful Instructional Strategies for English Language Learners (ELLs)

Overall Strategies

1. Provide a climate of warmth and caring, which nurtures a sense of comfort.
2. Seat ELL students close to the front of the room.
3. Establish a daily routine in your classroom and prepare the students for any changes.
4. Use as many of the senses (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting) as possible to present information.
5. Provide student guidelines for written work and homework assignments.
6. Provide alternative instruction whenever the class lessons are extremely difficult for ELL students.
7. Arrange small discussion and talking activities that permit students to practice verbal skills.
8. Give verbal information and explanations along with visual representations.
9. Allow students ample time to complete assignments.
10. Keep directions short and simple.
11. Assign buddies and peer tutors to your ELL students.
12. Clearly explain homework assignments, both verbally and in writing. Consider that ELLs student may lack English language support at home.
13. Allow ELL students to use bilingual dictionaries as appropriate.
14. Use learning centers as alternative instruction to provide sufficient reinforcement of content material.

Language Arts

1. Use oral techniques, such as prompting, modeling elicitation, and chunking.
2. Use the Total Physical Response (TPR) teaching strategy, which introduces a new language through a series of commands to enact an event.
3. Use the dialogue journal technique in which student regularly communicate with the teacher.
4. Speak clearly and simplify the vocabulary; it is not necessary to speak more loudly.
5. Use the Language Experience Approach, which incorporates the experiences, oral language, and interests of student to develop reading and writing skills.
6. Limit correcting errors in pronunciation, structure, grammar, and vocabulary. Model correct usage of these things by stating the response correctly without comment.
7. Provide frequent review and repetition in each step of language and content learning.
8. Choose reading and writing activities that activate students' prior knowledge..
9. Use pop songs and favorite read-aloud poems.
10. Present new reading vocabulary extensively, use props, and facilitate multi-sensory formats.
11. Integrate your English curriculum with other subject areas to expand English vocabulary.
12. Role play stories from your literary-based reader; make ELL students with adequate language active participants.
13. Choose literature representative of the cultural backgrounds of the students in your classroom.
14. Provide individual and group activities to develop listening and speaking skills through learning centers.

Computer Literacy

1. Teach through modeling rather than giving directions.
2. Assign work in groups with native speakers of English.
3. Have students surpass their own previous records rather than the scores achieved by rivals.
4. Select software that has been proven effective for the purpose of using content to enhance language development.

Science

1. Involve ELL students in "hands-on" learning experiences to allow them to be more active participants.
2. Present new information in small sequential steps, allowing students to concentrate on one thing at a time.
3. Use outlines and charts during class presentations.
4. Model instruction for experiments to introduce and explain new vocabulary.
5. Clearly explain and have posted in the room all safety procedures.
6. Write instructions on the board so that ELL students can refer to them when needed.

7. Use the cooperative learning approach in which students are given opportunities for peer instruction.
8. Assign low-level language proficiency activities in which ELL students will experience success.
9. Integrate vocabulary expansion activities, such as labeling, identifying, and classifying information.
10. Allow students to answer fewer questions or written problems as long as they acquire the key concepts of the lesson.
11. Provide for oral testing of new material if ELL students are not able to be tested in a written format (or vice-versa).
12. Research and present to the class interesting scientific information concerning ELL students' cultural or ethnic groups.

Social Studies / Humanities

1. Employ games and simulations to engage students in problem-solving and decision-making.
2. Assign independent projects in which ELL students will be given opportunities to display their academic growth.
3. Guide ELL students through the process of textbook reading by asking questions, providing purpose statements, and conducting discussions.
4. Use graphic organizers such as webbing and semantic maps.
5. Modify lesson objectives according to the language levels levels of the ELL students.
6. Plan for culturally oriented activities in which ELL students can contribute their knowledge of culture and to promote cultural understanding in the classroom.
7. Use audiovisual materials that support a multi-sensory approach.
8. Teach book formats to ensure that ELL students know how to use each part of the books.
9. Encourage ELL students to bring newspapers, magazines, and artifacts from their home cultures and countries to show to peers.
10. Assign cultural awareness projects to familiarize ELL students with the differences and similarities of the cultures in the classroom.

Math

1. Encourage students to verbalize the steps involved in solving problem as they work through them on paper.
2. Use manipulatives to help students visualize math concepts.
3. Allow students to use computational aids such as number lines, abacuses, counters, and computation charts.
4. Teach math concepts and computation procedures through games and kinesthetic activities.
5. Give practice in reading word problems by identifying key words to determine the operations needed to solve the problem.
1. Use good audiovisual programs for presentation of new concepts and assignments whenever possible.
2. Conduct extensive comprehension checks by either the teacher or a peer tutor.
3. Begin with the easiest word problem and add the harder problems in a progressive order.
4. Group problems initially by the operational procedure to be used.
5. Research the methods of math computation and application of the particular language groups in your class whenever possible.

Remember:

ELL students are valuable additions to the classroom, as they have a wealth of knowledge, experiences, and culture to share!

What's good for ELL students is good for ALL students!