

ENGLISH as a SECOND LANGUAGE

Acronyms

ESL
English as a Second
Language

LEP
Limited English Proficient

PHLOTE
Primary Home Language
is Other than English

from

“The Updated & Revised Teacher Resource Guide for English as a Second Language Instruction”

Identification Process

English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are based upon four areas identified in testing for whom English is not their primary language. The four areas are oral language, oral expression, broad reading, and written language. An ESL program is designed to provide instruction that meets each student’s individual needs based upon the assessment of English proficiency in listening, speaking, and reading.

When the student appears at the school as a resident, if from the Home Language Survey, the student is identified as LEP, the SMASD will administer approved tests. From this testing, an aggregate score based upon performance will be used to establish the amount of additional instruction in English that may be required.

An ESL planning meeting which includes parents/guardians is scheduled upon the completion of the evaluation process. Adequate content area support will be provided while the student is learning English to assure achievement of the academic standards. The amount of time in class will vary from student to student depending upon scores received on testing in oral language, oral expression, broad reading, and written language. A program outline is developed dependent upon individual need.



Child specific data is shared with the educational team working with an individual ESL student.

Learning Strategies

The Woodcock-Johnson III: Reports, Recommendations, and Strategies manual provides a listing of a multitude of learning strategies that may be beneficial to the development of oral language (expressive and receptive), broad reading, and written language. Selected strategies from this manual are detailed below.

GENERAL STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP ORAL LANGUAGE

Seat the student near the teacher and away from environmental noises.

When teaching or speaking to the student, face him, pause between phrases for processing time, limit sentence or clause length, and use simple vocabulary. Give the student an opportunity to request repetition or clarification.

Limit sentence length and complexity when speaking to the student.

Be aware of the linguistic complexity of the language you use in instructions, questions, and test items. Encourage the student to ask you to restate difficult instructions or questions using simpler vocabulary.

Be aware of when the student has become inattentive or looks confused. Repeat what you have said or otherwise reinforce the message.

Directly teach the student to request repetition or rephrasing of instructions, questions, or statements when necessary.

Allow the student to ask you to paraphrase test questions. Frequently the student may know the content but not understand the question.

If, when called on, the student does not appear to know the answer to a question, repeat it verbatim. If the student still does not appear to know the answer, rephrase the question in simpler terms.

Call on the student soon after posing a question. In a long wait period, the student is likely to forget the question and/or the answer he had wanted to give.

When calling on the student in class, provide him with as much time as necessary to organize his thoughts and formulate a response. He may know the answer but need extra time to find the words. Privately, alert the student to this plan so that he does not feel pressured to come up with an answer quickly.

As the student's word-retrieval problem interferes with the fluency of his oral reading, do not require the student to read aloud in the classroom. Call on the student if he volunteers.

Never assume that the student has prior knowledge or previous experience of the words or information you are using to teach new concepts.

Modify assignments to accommodate the student's language impairment. For example, to accommodate a weakness in formulating sentences, reduce the length

of an assigned report.

When grading the student's papers, make allowances for the effect of his specific language difficulties. For example, overlook grammatical errors in a paper with good conceptual content.

Waive foreign language requirements for the student.

Encourage the use of newly learned language skills in the classroom. Structure situations that require the student to use the skills he is working to develop. Reinforce the student for use of new language skills by recognizing the value of the information he has offered or the clarity with which it was stated.

TEACHING PRINCIPLES TO DEVELOP ORAL LANGUAGE

Introduce activities and tasks by explicitly stating the focus and purpose – what the student is meant to learn and why.

Provide ample examples of a new concept or skill that relate the new information to what is already known.

Help the student organize and relate new and known content area information and skills by using metacognitive strategies such as the K-W-L-S (Know, Want to Find Out, Learned, Still Need to Learn) Strategy.

Begin language remediation for the student in contextualized language (speaking about things in the immediate environment and pertaining to the current situation) and move gradually into de-contextualized language.

Use reading and writing as models for oral language skills as well as for reinforcement.

Integrate oral language, reading, and writing for all language skills taught. When presenting any new skill or concept, move from pictorial stimuli to print (reading/writing) and oral language (listening/speaking). For example, when teaching cause/effect terms, use pictures that clearly depict the relationship, then offer printed sentences that denote the relationship. Move into oral comprehension, oral expression, and writing.

When teaching any new process or skill, provide slow, step-by-sep instruction.

When introducing a new concept, skill, or language pattern, use simple sentence structures and familiar, concrete vocabulary so that the focus of attention is on the new information.

Draw the student's attention to new concepts, words, or constructs by placing vocal stress on them when speaking.

When initially introducing a new concept, present the information more slowly than you would when speaking about a familiar concept.

Provide redundancy and repetition in teaching any new concept. Repeat important statements verbatim and explain the concept in a variety of ways.

Teach new concepts and skills within thematic units so that all new learning is interrelated conceptually. The thematic unit provides a consistent framework and familiar context to facilitate the introduction of new concepts and skills.

Within thematic units, use many contexts to highlight the concept or skill you are introducing. For example, if teaching temporal relationships in social studies, you might read about how ancient people using interesting rock formations and discuss the sequence of events in the story.

For science, you might do experiments with different types of rocks, using the specific temporal terms you are teaching in your instructions as well as in class discussions after the experiment.

Encourage reading in the classroom. Use incentives for the student if necessary. Reading will help the student improve their vocabulary and syntactical knowledge.

Do not exclusively use reading materials that are highly dependent on word families and specific phonic elements. The necessity of maintaining particular word forms restricts the use of meaningful, familiar language, making it difficult for the student to predict upcoming words and syntactic forms.

MULTI-MODALITY INSTRUCTION TO SUPPORT ORAL LANGUAGE

Present all types of verbal information accompanied by visual stimuli that clearly illustrates the concept being taught. Examples are pictures, charts, graphs, semantic maps, and videotapes. Simultaneous visual-verbal presentation is necessary for the student's comprehension and retention of the information.

Teach the student to create a visual image of what is heard or read so that they can produce a visual input to supplement verbal information.

If the student is unable to take in auditory and visual information simultaneously, direct the student to look at the complete visual display, and then direct them to the portion of it about which you will be speaking. When he has had adequate time to look at the illustration, give a brief oral explanation. Then, direct the student to look at the visual again.

When possible, involve the student in concept or skill learning tactile-kinesthetically or experientially.

Be aware that the student's ability to benefit from any activity that is purely auditory, such as round-robin reading, is extremely limited.

LECTURE STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ORAL LANGUAGE

When lecturing, present ideas in an organized and logical sequence. Keep the points as simple as possible and group related information.

When presenting lectures, use an overhead projector to highlight the important points.

Prior to beginning a lecture, write on the board the important points to be covered and review the major points at the end of the lecture. This will help the student recognize and retain the critical information.

Provide the student with an outline of questions to follow during a lecture. Go over the questions before beginning the lecture and guide a discussion of the answers after the lecture.

For increased comprehension of lectures, provide the student with a study guide that identifies the critical information. Encourage the student to complete the study guide and then use it to study for exams.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING STUDENTS TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS AND SUPPORT ORAL LANGUAGE

Use barrier games to develop the awareness that careful listening is necessary for following instructions.

Teach the student to monitor his understanding of instructions so that he recognizes when there is the need to ask for clarification. Some techniques for this purpose are barrier games and giving instructions that have ambiguous or nonsense statements in them.

In order to teach the student when to recognize the need for clarification of instructions, present instructions in which information is either missing, unclear or incompatible with another statement. Teach the student how to ask specific questions for clarification.

Teach the student to comprehend the sequence of instructions, the terms used to denote sequence, and a strategy to remember more than two steps.

Use barrier games to practice following directions using spatial terms, such as right top, below, and center. Tape-record the instructions given by the teacher and the student. In the case of a disagreement about the wording of instructions given, the tape may be played back.

Once the student has learned basic spatial terms, teach him to follow spatial directions on a map. Start with maps of familiar areas, such as the student's house.

Teach the student to write lists of things he has to do or remember.

VOCABULARY BUILDING STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ORAL LANGUAGE

To increase vocabulary, emphasize building general knowledge.

Directly work on vocabulary development in reading, writing, and oral discussion. Ensure that oral vocabulary continues to develop and that new words are pronounced and used correctly.

Correct mispronunciations by teaching the student the correct spelling of a word.

Expose the student to multiple repetitions of new words in many different contexts and settings.

When teaching vocabulary, do not use passive learning activities such as looking words up in the dictionary and memorizing their definitions.

When teaching vocabulary, activate the student's awareness of his familiarity or lack of familiarity with the words.

Teach all new vocabulary by association with known concepts.

Focus on building receptive and expressive vocabulary skills through vocabulary games based on any unfamiliar words the student finds in his reading or hears during the day.

Introduce new vocabulary by expanding the student's statements. For example, if the student says, "The house is old and ugly," the teacher might say, "Yes, that house looks dilapidated."

Use interesting pictures to foster and reinforce vocabulary development. The book *Animalia* (Base, 1986) present numerous objects and activities in detailed pictures. Each page represents a letter; all of the pictures on the page begin with that letter.

Read stories to the student that are on or slightly above his language level. Discuss any unknown words using pictures or known synonyms. Provide ample practice in using the new words.

Directly teach the student that words can have more than one meaning. Teach multiple meanings and provide practice in using them.

Teach the student to use a thesaurus for writing.



CONCEPT BUILDING STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ORAL LANGUAGE

Play games that focus on word meanings. These include thinking of words that go together, making collages of pictures that go together, and discussing how the words or pictures are related. Later, incorporate the concept of opposites.

Play games with the student while driving in the car or when taking a walk that will require him to categorize words. For example, you may say, “Tell me everything you see that looks like a circle” or, “Tell me everything you see that is a machine.”

Play games in which the student tells how two or more objects or groups of objects are similar.

Teach the student the meaning of question words (e.g. what, when, where, why, and how). During play activities, ask questions using these words and guide the student to the appropriate answer. Later, use the question words in less experiential settings, such as before, during, or after a story is read (e.g. “Look at the picture. What is happening? Why do you think the boy is doing that?”)

Devise activities to develop the idea of sequence in daily events, in the different parts of one event, and in the events within the story. Use sequence words (e.g. “first,” “second,” and “finally”) to describe the events and set up situations in which the student demonstrates comprehension of these words (e.g. “What did we do second?”)

Plan experiences with the student in which he helps to decide the necessary sequence of activities. Within these situations, teach comprehension and expression of temporal and sequence words (e.g. “first,” “before,” “later,” “last”).

Teach/reinforce positional (e.g. first/last), directional (e.g. right/left) and quantitative (e.g. more, fewer) concepts by using them in a variety of experiential contexts.

Directly teach the concepts antonyms and synonyms and provide many activities for practice in finding antonyms and synonyms for given words.

Use all possible situations to teach the student words for feelings. Ask what he is feeling during or after specific activities and conflicts.
Teach the student to comprehend the linguistic relationships signaled by temporal, spatial, cause/effect, analogous, exceptional, and comparative terms. Teach the student a variety of specific terms for each of these concepts.

WORD RETRIEVAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ORAL LANGUAGE

Ensure that all new words presented are well integrated into a conceptual framework and firmly understood.

Provide activities to reinforce integration of recently learned and familiar words within a strong conceptual framework. Strong associations with known words and concepts might help to prevent word-retrieval difficulties.

Teach the student to recognize when he is having difficulty retrieving a word so that he may use a retrieval strategy.

Teach the student to visualize the object or the spelling of the word to prompt recall of the verbal label.

Teach the student to think of a category for the target word and mentally list associated objects to try and prompt recall.

Teach the student to visualize a different context for the word and mentally describe it with a sentence.

To facilitate word retrieval, encourage the student to try to recall and say the first sound of the word.

To facilitate word retrieval, teach the student to “talk around the word,” describing its appearance, function, and/or category.

If the student cannot recall a word, encourage him to use a synonym.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR NARRATIVE AND EXPOSITORY WRITING STRATEGIES IN SUPPORT OF ORAL LANGUAGE

Teach the student to use a story grammar for following, retelling, and generating narratives.

Until the student becomes more familiar with expository structure, present informational material in narrative structure.

Select reading and listening materials with clear organizational structures. For example, it may be easier for a student to understand and recall a story containing all the elements of a story grammar (e.g. setting, problem, internal response, attempt at resolution, consequence, ending) than to infer those elements from a story written in repeated language such as “The House that Jack Built.”

Teach the student to recognize the structure of the type of discourse and text you are using in the classroom. For example, if working with stories in a narrative structure, teach the student to recognize the elements of a story grammar. For

expository discourse or text, teach structures such as comparison/contrast and enumeration.

Teach the student the differences between narrative and expository styles. As a basis for discussion, give the student a paragraph written in narrative style and another written in expository style, but with similar information. Discuss with the student the stylistic differences.

Directly teach the student to understand the organizational structure of expository material. Examples of expository paragraph structures include: sequence (main idea and details which must be given in a specific order), enumerative (topic sentence and supportive examples), cause/effect (topic sentence and details telling why), descriptive (topic sentence and description of attributes), problem solving (statement of problem followed by description, causes, solutions), and comparison/contrast (statements of differences and similarities).

Teach the student different ways information might be organized and draw a visual pattern to illustrate that type of organization. For example, contrast might be depicted as a divided square with two subheadings and blocks down the side for categories; description might be depicted as a tree with small branches coming off each major limb; and cause/effect might be depicted as a circle or number of circles with an arrow leading from one circle to another; chronological sequence might be depicted as a timeline. Subsequently, teach the student to recognize these patterns in reading material and orally presented information and to use these patterns to organize information for writing.

Use simple semantic mapping to help the student organize information for a short oral report. First the student can base the report on notes written from the semantic map; later he should learn to organize thoughts into a mental semantic map to guide expression of ideas.

Ensure that any strategy the student learns for oral comprehension is generalized to speaking and writing.

