

CULTIVATING A LANGUAGE AND CONTENT FOCUS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

Literacy Participant
Materials: Enhancing Your
Lessons



Standards-in-Action

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Applying What We've Learned to Our Lessons

POSSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs)

1. How does the lesson prepare ELs to read the text(s) and access the content of the lesson? Here are some ideas:

- Build knowledge about the text and topic of the lesson through:
 - Short readings and discussions that relate to learners' various interests, reading abilities, experiences, and cultures;
 - Visuals, movies, photographs, or illustration.
- Tap students' funds of knowledge about the topic and content of the lesson and provide opportunities for them to share with their peers.
- Make explicit links to past learning and experiences in class.
- Provide graphic organizers to help learners capture and reflect on new knowledge related to the text and topic of the lesson.
- Use a variety of collaborative learning activities to help learners reach a mutual understanding, retain information, and develop their English.

2. How does the lesson provide ample opportunities for ELs to develop, deepen, and refine their understanding of the text(s) and develop their language? Here are some ideas:

- Include multiple close reads of the text allowing students to recognize new information each time through sequences of questions.
- Transform parts of the text into students' own words.

- Read aloud the text to build fluency with its words, syntax, and meaning.
- Design pair work and small-group discussions that allow ELs to share their reflections on what they are learning. This work should also allow ELs to use their home language in combination with English.
- Provide graphic organizers to help learners capture and reflect on new knowledge.
- Attend systematically to the high-value vocabulary and syntax in the text(s) by:
 - Tying new vocabulary words to cognates where there are common roots with English;
 - Engaging students in the analysis of the structure of words and their parts;
 - Looking for different forms of the same word;
 - Highlighting syntactically complex sentences for special examination and discussion;
 - Analyzing how authors use certain words or devices to communicate claims;
 - Including various engaging activities to help learners capture and reflect on the meaning of new vocabulary.

3. How does the lesson solidify or extend ELs' understanding of what they are reading and learning? Here are some ideas:

- Focus on emphasizing the vocabulary they have learned from the reading through writing and discussion activities.
- Ask students to recreate orally or in writing parts of the text in everyday language.
- Provide students with opportunities to write about the reading(s) and share their understanding in varied and novel ways.
- Provide students with opportunities to orally process their ideas before they write.

- Facilitate students' entry into and development of writing sentences. This may include, for example, sentence starters, linking words, transitional phrases, and use of home language.
- Encourage students to reflect on their learning – where there was growth and where there were challenges.
- Read aloud the text to build fluency with its words, syntax, and meaning.
- Design pair work and small-group discussions that allow ELs to share their reflections on what they are learning. This work should also allow ELs to use their home language in combination with English.