

Here's How You Can Help English Language Learners on the First Day

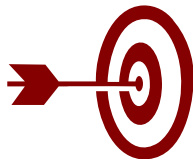
1. Treat them like all of the other students.
2. Talk with them and see if they speak English.
3. Talk with them and see if they have gone to school before and where. ELLs can vary greatly in the amount of previous formal education.
4. Provide them textbooks and desks.
5. Talk with their parents and establish a positive relationship.
6. Show them important places in the school:
 - Principal's office
 - School nurses office
 - Lunchroom
 - Lockers
 - Bathrooms
 - Other classrooms
7. Discuss common routines, such as:
 - How you go to the lunchroom
 - Procedures for being excused to use the bathroom
 - The class schedule
 - When does the school day end
 - Getting home—help them (assign a buddy) to the correct bus.
8. Introduce the student to key people in the school:
 - Principal
 - School nurse
 - Bilingual aide
9. Find out the district's policies and procedures for teaching ELL students.
10. Talk with your English-speaking students about how to treat and respect students who do not speak English. Assign a buddy for the day (or more).
11. Have an age-appropriate "emergency kit" ready in case ELL students come unexpectedly to your class. "Emergency kits" could contain the following:
 - Age-appropriate books/magazines
 - Books on tapes
 - Writing paper
 - Map activities
 - Pen/pencils
 - Puzzles
 - Coloring sheets
 - Sight words
 - Crayons
 - An "All About Me" form that students complete—use pictures
 - Trade books
 - Math worksheets
12. For younger children, take a class picture to print and send home titled "Me and My New Friends".



Contact the district's bilingual/ELL coordinator or the CESA 9 Title III coordinator for additional assistance on getting started.

Name: _____ Phone Ext. _____

What to expect:



- Listening is the first language domain; they should be able to listen attentively for short periods
- A 6-month silent period
- 500 words in their receptive vocabulary; mainly basic interpersonal communication or "playground" language (BICS) and survival language. Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) will develop later as they gain vocabulary from classroom instruction
- May repeat everything you say
- Will be able to respond to pictures and other visuals
- Can understand and duplicate gestures and movements to show comprehension
- Point, label, match, draw, copy
- Understand phrases or chunks with one-step commands/directions
- Phonetic, semantic, syntactic, grammatical errors
- Lack of knowledge of American culture, traditions, customs

Questions to ask: With graphic support, you can ask . . .



- "Show me . . ."
- "Which of these . . . ?"
- "Point to . . ."
- "Is this a . . . ?"
- Yes/No & WH-questions

Don't forget about parents. Determine if translation is needed for important documents sent home.

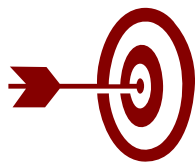
How you can help:



- Work to create a safe environment (low anxiety) to practice their new language skills
- Provide feedback in a helpful manner and remind other native English-speaking classmates to be sensitive to ELLs learning a new language
- Provide much repetition and speak clearly and in a slower yet natural pace
- Provide a "buddy" who may or may not speak their language
- The school day is exhausting for ELLs as they are overwhelmed with listening to English language all day long; provide some non-language activities
- Focus attention on listening comprehension activities and on building a receptive vocabulary
- Be culturally sensitive and provide opportunities to share cultures
- Try to learn a few words or phrases in the ELL's native language
- Take the time to explain idioms of the English language
- Provide instruction in multiple intelligences and modalities
- Provide gesturing and role playing as much as possible
- Provide sensory, graphic, and interactive supports as needed

Level 1: Entering

What to expect:



- This stage may last six months to a year and students will develop a receptive and active vocabulary of about 1000 words
- They may speak one- or two-word phrases; short language chunks have been memorized however these chunks may not always be used correctly
- An understanding of parts of the lesson and simple directions
- BICS/conversational language will continue to develop and CALP with difficulty
- Below grade level skills in reading and writing
- Phonetic, semantic, syntactic, and grammatical errors that often impede the meaning

Questions to ask:



Continue questioning with graphic support, you can ask . . .

- "Show me . . ."
- "Which of these . . . ?"
- "Point to . . ."
- "Is this a . . . ?"
- Yes/No & WH-questions
- "Is it the _____ one or the _____ one?"

Caution!

Lack of
language does
not equate to low
academic ability.

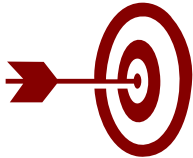
How you can help:



- Speak clearly and at a natural rate—not too fast; repeat, rephrase, repeat
- Avoid pronouns
- Use printing vs. cursive
- Build background knowledge through front-loading and pre-teaching
- Be willing to accept one or two word responses or visual representations
- Give students the opportunity to participate in some of the whole class activities
- Provide sensory, graphic, and interactive supports as needed when teaching and assessing content; focus on key vocabulary and concepts
- Build vocabulary using pictures
- Provide listening activities
- For younger children, use simple books with predictable text
- Make use of graphic organizers, charts and graphs
- Scaffold writing activities beginning with labeling and short sentences
- Give directions one step at a time
- Continue to provide instruction in multiple intelligences and learning modalities

Level 2: Beginning

What to expect:



- A vocabulary of about 3,000 words and can communicate with simple phrases and sentences using general and specific vocabulary
- Progression through this level may take longer than previous levels
- Will ask simple questions, that may or may not be grammatically correct, such as "Can I go to bathroom?"
- Will initiate short conversations with classmates
- Will understand easy stories read in class with the support of pictures
- Reading English phonetically
- They will also be able to do some content work with teacher support
- Can read short stories & modified texts in content area subjects
- Complete graphic organizers with word banks
- Understand and answer questions about charts and graphs
- Learns content area vocabulary (i.e. flashcards, matching, riddles)
- Can participate in duet, pair and choral reading activities
- Understand teacher explanations and two-step directions
- Can compose & illustrate brief stories based on personal experience or write in journals
- Phonetic, semantic, syntactic, and grammatical errors that may impede the meaning

Questions to ask:



- "What happened first, next ...?"
- "Tell me in your own words about ..."
- "How do ____ and ____ compare/contrast?"
- "Describe ..."
- "Explain how ..."

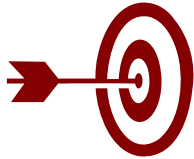
How you can help:



- Continue to build background knowledge through front-loading and pre-teaching
- Use interactive dialogue journals as a conversation between the teacher and the student
- Challenge students to reach higher levels of communicating without frustrating students.
- Accept shorter responses for complex speaking and writing activities
- Continue to provide sensory, graphic, and interactive supports as needed when teaching and assessing content; focus on key vocabulary/concepts
- Continue to provide instruction in multiple intelligences and modalities

Level 3: Developing

What to expect:



- A vocabulary of 6000 active words including specific and technical content terms
- Use of more complex sentences when speaking and writing and are willing to express opinions and share thoughts
- Will ask questions to clarify what they are learning in class
- Able to work in grade level math and science classes with some teacher support
- Comprehension of English literature and social studies content is increasing
- Students may use strategies from their native language to learn content in English
- Writing at this stage will have many phonetic, semantic, syntactic, and grammatical errors (does not impede meaning) as ELLs try to master the complexity of English grammar and sentence structure
- Ability to synthesize what they have learned and to make inferences from that learning
- Ability to understand more complex concepts

Questions to ask:



- Content-related questions that may require inferences and complex responses
- "What was the character trying to do?"
- "What is your opinion?"
- "What will happen next?"
- "Why do you think ...?"
- "How does that affect ...?"

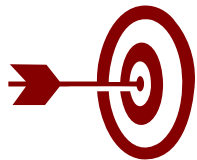
How you can help:



- Continue to provide support—especially in content areas such as history/social studies
- Scaffold writing to include a variety of sentence lengths, detail, and richer vocabulary
- Model and demonstrate process and procedures
- Continue to build background knowledge through front-loading and pre-teaching

Level 4: Expanding

What to expect:



- 4-10 years to reach this stage of cognitive academic language proficiency in a second language
- Oral or written communication in English will be comparable to proficient English speaking peers
- Most ELLs at this stage have been exited if they have been enrolled in an ESL or other support program
- Gaps in knowledge of American culture or lore

Questions to ask:



- Same questioning techniques used with English-speaking students
- Content-related questions that may require inferences and complex responses
- "How do you interpret ...?"
- "Evaluate the ..."
- "Elaborate on ..."

How you can help:

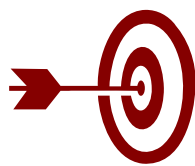


- Continue to provide support for complex content as needed
- Use teaching techniques and assessment used with most of the English speaking students

Need more help? Ask your local ELL coordinator for a copy of the WIDA Resource Guide. You may also download it at www.wida.us.

Level 5: Bridging

What to expect:



- Students are able to communicate at the same level as native-speaking peers
- Understand the language used to discuss and comprehend abstract ideas, concepts and implied meanings
- Students have language to analyze, synthesize and make judgments about content learned
- Occasional gaps in knowledge of American culture or lore

Questions to ask:

- Same questioning techniques used with English-speaking students



How you can help:

- Students have reached full English proficiency and should be expected to perform academically without additional language support



You have to go to grow!
CESA 9 offers workshops
to help mainstream
teachers better serve
ELLs. Check the website
www.cesa9.k12.wi.us

Level 6: Reaching



A Teacher's Survival Guide

***Getting Started Working with
English Language Learners®***

Prepared for CESA 9 Title III Consortium Members®
Created by Julee Dredske and Colleen Murphy, CESA 5 Title III Consortium

Once a year all ELLs (English Language Learner) are assessed for how well they are learning the English language. In Wisconsin, the test utilized is called ACCESS for ELL®. This test will use the state academic standards (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, social/instructional) to assess the students' ability to communicate in the English language in 4 different domains:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| LISTENING |  |
| SPEAKING |  |
| READING |  |
| WRITING |  |

The test results provide a rating for each domain as well as an overall composite score that identifies the student's ELP (English Language Proficiency). Wisconsin is a member of the WIDA consortium which defines the students' ability to communicate in the English language with 6 levels. These levels are:

- 6—Reaching
- 5—Bridging
- 4—Expanding
- 3—Developing
- 2—Beginning
- 1—Entering

This guide will help you understand ELLs' abilities at the various stages of language acquisition.