



ADVANCING RESEARCH, IMPROVING EDUCATION

SOUTHEAST COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

Teaching Literacy in English to K–12 English Learners

Jazzin' It Up: A Medley of Notes for Creating a Culture That Supports English Language Learners

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ALARMING STATISTICS

- Eighty-nine percent of Hispanics and 86% of African American middle and high school students read below grade level (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2005).
- Almost 50% of students of color do not graduate from high school with a regular diploma in 4 years of instruction (Orfield, Losen, Wald, & Swanson, 2004).
- Ninety-six percent of 8th grade ELLs scored below basic level on 2005 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) (Perie, Grigg, & Donahue, 2005).

(Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007)



ANTICIPATION GUIDE

Before Reading Agree or Disagree	Statement	During/After Reading	
		Agree or Disagree	Text Evidence
	1. English Language Learners (ELLs) are the fastest growing segment of the student population with the highest growth in grades 4–6.		
	2. Many ELLs have disabilities, which is why they are often overrepresented in special education.		
	3. There is strong evidence to support statewide English-only initiatives to improve the learning outcome of ELLs.		
	4. Children learn a second language easily and quickly.		
	5. ELLs perform much better when placed according to language proficiency and not academic achievement.		
	6. Research recommends that teachers of ELLs schedule regular structured pair or peer-assisted learning tasks.		
	7. Formative early reading assessments in English are valid for ELLs.		
	8. Explicit and intensive vocabulary instruction helps ELLs understand what they read.		

STOP, TURN, & TALK



MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH KEY CONCEPTS

LEARNING TASK: WORD SORT

1. Review briefly all the word/phrase cards with your partner (or small group).
2. Sort or group the cards based on your facilitator's instructions.
3. Share your sort with others.

Take turns sharing your word sort in small groups.

- Include in your sharing the rationale behind your sort.
- Look for similarities and differences in the shared sorts.
- Discuss how you might use word sorts with your students.
- Discuss what you might need to consider before using word sorts in your classroom.

4. Report out

Be prepared to report out to the whole group if requested by the facilitators.

THINK – INK – PAIR - SHARE

THINK – INK: Rate your familiarity with the research on K–12 Literacy for ELLs by placing an X on the continuum and then completing the Word Sort below.



Follow the directions of the session facilitator for sorting the following words:

academic language	front loading	questioning	codeswitching	essential questions
comprehension	2nd language acquisition	making connections	phonemic awareness and phonics	content themes
metacognition	scaffold	word study	motivation	simultaneous development
prior knowledge	fluency	world knowledge	vocabulary	active engagement and interaction

STOP, TURN, & TALK



The Big Picture

Teaching Literacy in English to K-5 English Learners

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

- English learners lag behind their native English-speaking peers in reading achievement.
- Without strong reading skills, English learners will not be able to reach challenging standards.
- Many English learners are not being taught to read in English until they are able to speak in English.





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KEY SOURCES IN K-12 ELL LITERACY/READING

Doing What Works



IES
Institute of Education Sciences

NCTE | The National Council of Teachers of English



TESOL Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.
A global education association.



There's a crisis in America's high schools.
We're working to make every child a graduate.

KEY FINDINGS (continued)

ELLs should receive **high quality** reading instruction **at the same time** as their English language vocabulary is developing—no matter what the students' native language is.

KEY FINDINGS (continued)

Phonological processing, letter knowledge, and word/text reading **assessment measures are valid** for determining which ELLs are likely to benefit from intervention. In addition, the set of **screening measures demonstrates moderate predictive validity** for English learners from homes speaking a variety of languages (e.g., Spanish, Punjabi, Tamil, Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, Hmong, and Portuguese, etc.).

(Doing What Works (DWW) Web site, 2008)

KEY FINDINGS (continued)

“**Big 5**” needed for native speakers also needed for ELLs.

- Grades K–5: Phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension
- PA and Phonics: Earliest stages of reading development
- Grades 6–12: Word study, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, motivation

(National Reading Panel (NRP), 2000)

KEY FINDINGS (continued)

LEARNING TASK: READING AN ENGLISH TEXT SAMPLE

DIRECTIONS: Read the following text to yourself. We will have a short quiz when you have finished. NO TALKING!

The Batsmen were merciless against the Bowlers. The bowlers placed their men in slips and covers. But to no avail. The Batsmen hit one hour after another along with an occasional six. Not once did their balls hit their stumps or get caught.

Comprehension: Pop Quiz

1. Who were merciless against the Bowlers?
2. Where did the Bowlers place their men?
3. Was this strategy successful?
4. Who hit an occasional six?
5. How many times did the Batsmen's balls hit the stump?

(Daniels & Zemelman in *Subjects Matter*, 2004)



STOP, TURN, & TALK



KEY FINDINGS (continued)

ELLs can **often “pronounce” words accurately**, but they **don’t necessarily understand** the meaning of the words as related to the text or content area.

(Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Buly & Valencia, 2002; Lesaux, Lipka, & Siegel, 2006)

READING AN ENGLISH TEXT SAMPLE (continued)

Inverarity viciously pulled Brown into the gully but was sent retiring to the pavilion by a shooter from Cox. Jones in slips and Chappel at silly mid on were superb, and Daniel bowled a maiden over in his first spell. Yallop took his toll with three towering sixes but Thompson had little to do in the covers. Grant was dismissed with a beautiful Yorker and Jones went from a brute of a ball...

KEY FINDINGS (continued)

The great majority of ELLs experiencing reading/literacy difficulties struggle with the skills related to **fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.**

Activating Background Knowledge

Learning Task: Structured Brainstorming and Dialogue

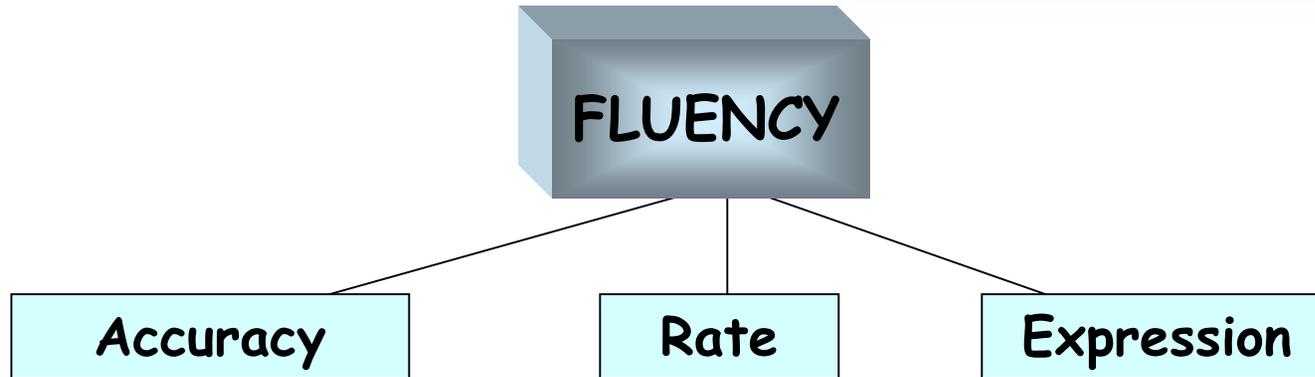
Using a Circle Map

1. Get into small groups as directed by the session facilitator.
2. Brainstorm individually all that you know about your assigned level (e.g., primary, elementary, middle, high school) and key literacy area (e.g., fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) using a circle map. Remember to include your frame(s) of reference.
3. When directed by the session facilitator, share your circle map with your small group members.
4. Create one group circle map to share with the whole group.



STOP, TURN, & TALK





MULTITASKING

Fast Processing

- Language systems
- Punctuation
- Voice qualities

Automaticity

Pacing

Phrasing or chunking

Confirming by continuous cross-checking for meaning



VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Incidental or Implicit Instruction

- Oral language engagement
- Reading to, with, and by adults or peers
- Independent reading

Intentional or Explicit Instruction

- Active engagement in literacy-rich contexts
- Restructuring tasks: Procedures, processes, and materials
- Repeated/multiple exposures
- Instructional strategic practices

Types of Vocabulary

- Listening/Hearing
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Controlled
- Core/Technical

COMPREHENSION

Metacognitive, Non-linear, Multi-Strategy Process
Reader-, Text-, Activity-, and Context-Specific

Active Engagement with Text as a Means to
Acquire Knowledge, Enhance Understanding, Construct Meaning

INSTRUCT AND PRACTICE
WITH STRATEGIES

BEFORE

- Activate prior knowledge
- Pre-read
- Predict
- Connect
- Question
- Recognize text structure

DURING

- Connect
- Visualize
- Question
- Predict
- Monitor
- Infer
- Use fix-up strategies
- Reread
- Read selectively, fluently,
and decode rapidly

AFTER

- Summarize
- Synthesize
- Question
- Interpret on different levels
- Connect
- Infer
- Verify
- Reread
- Determine what's important



STOP, TURN, & TALK



In Summary: Literacy Instructional Recommendations for ELLs

1. ELLs need early, explicit, and intensive instruction in **phonological awareness and phonics** in order to build decoding skills.
2. Instruction and intervention to promote ELLs' reading fluency must focus on **vocabulary development and increased exposure to print**.
3. ELLs need significant opportunities to engage in **structured, academic talk** across all K–12 classrooms.
4. Academic language learning is facilitated through **production and interaction** and depends on the **ability to practice and produce** language; it is optimized when **connected to reading and writing tasks**; it needs to be **modeled and taught explicitly**.
5. Independent reading is only beneficial when it is **structured and purposeful** and there is a **good reader-text match**.

(Center on Instruction (COI), 2005, 2007)

Revisiting the Anticipation Guide

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Research-Based Recommendations for Effective ELL Instruction: Policymakers and Schools

- Delineate explicit expectations for ELLs
- Provide research-based professional development for teachers of ELLs
- Attend to processes and consequences of assessments of ELLs that recognize ELLs' heterogeneity
 - Avoid testing in English only
 - Use multiple assessments for varying purposes (e.g., content knowledge, literacy skills, language proficiency; diagnostic, formative, progress monitoring, summative, self-assessment, etc.)

(National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), 2008)

Research-Based Recommendations for Effective ELL Instruction: Teachers

- Present challenging curricular content
- Set high expectations
- Use technology effectively
- Recognize socio-cultural-linguistic factors
- Position native languages and home environments as resources
- Teach the basics of academic literacy in K–8
- Teach ELLs to simultaneously develop their skills with academic language and content in a variety of disciplines
- Recognize the differences between ELLs and under-prepared students (especially in higher education)

Ten Things the Mainstream Teacher Can Do Today to Improve Instruction for ELL Students

1. Enunciate clearly, but do not raise your voice. Add gestures, point directly to objects, or draw pictures when appropriate.
2. Write clearly, legibly, and in print—many ELL students have difficulty reading cursive.
3. Develop and maintain routines. Use clear and consistent signals for classroom instructions.
4. Repeat information and review it frequently. If a student does not understand, try rephrasing or paraphrasing in shorter sentences and simpler syntax. Check often for understanding, but do not ask, do you understand? Instead, have students demonstrate their learning in order to show comprehension.
5. Try to avoid idioms and slang words.

Ten Things the Mainstream Teacher Can Do Today to Improve Instruction for ELL Students (continued)

6. Present new information in the context of known information.
7. Announce the lesson's objectives and activities, and list instructions step-by-step.
8. Present information in a variety of ways.
9. Provide frequent summations of the salient points of a lesson, and always emphasize key vocabulary words.
10. Recognize student success overtly and frequently, but also be aware that in some cultures overt, individual praise is considered inappropriate and can therefore be embarrassing or confusing to the student.

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