

An ELL Binder

A Resource for the Mainstream Classroom Teacher

Judy R. Shreves Ph.D.

Warren County R-III School District

Welcome to the Exciting World of ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages)

Included in this binder you find information on the ELL
(English Language Learner) in your classroom.

Topics Included in this Binder

- How informed are you on ELL issues and second language acquisition - take the quick assessment.
- Access Scores for your students (confidential; keep secure)
- Tips on how to communication with the family
- Welcoming your ELL into your classroom
- Tips for a productive Parent Teacher conferences
- Second language acquisition information
- Strategies for teaching
- Stumbling blocks of ELLs
- Teacher resources
- Realistic expectations for you and your student

Ready for the ELLs in your classroom?

Answer true or false:

1. ____ English is the official language of the U.S.
2. ____ Students will acquire academic English if their parents speak English at home.
3. ____ It is okay to keep a student from other core classes such as social studies and science to work on English acquisition.
4. ____ If a student uses two languages simultaneously the child is confused or may need a referral to Special Education.
5. ____ The culture of a student doesn't affect how long it will take him/her to acquire English.
6. ____ The younger the child, the more skilled he/she is in acquiring a second language.
7. ____ It is important to know if the student in my classroom is here legally.
8. ____ It is optional that materials sent home to parents be translated.

ACCESS Results and interpretations

- Explain what academic areas the ACCESS assess. This will justify the importance of exposure to other core classes.
- Explain the differences between Tiers A, B, and C.
- Include both the parent/guardian report and teacher report.
- Point out the strengths/weaknesses of the student. It might be time to discuss the ESOL services the student will receive.
- Remind teachers test scores should remain in a secured area.
- Include Can Do descriptors, WIDA ELP Standards and performance definitions (entering, beginning, developing, expanding, bridging, reaching.)

Communication with the Family

- Share what you know about the child with the teacher.
- Although the parents speak another language in the home, this does not mean they are literate. They may not be able to read or write in their native language.
- Offer the teacher the list of names in the family and which of those members speaks English, if anyone.
- Encourage the teacher to try to contact the family first before contacting you for help. This will build confidence in the teacher as well as discourage the “your student/my student concept.”
- Help the teacher schedule a home visit; however, make sure to let the teacher know not to take offense if the family refuses.
- Let the teacher know his/her responsibility to remain in compliance with the 25th Memorandum included in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. *“Where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes such [national origin] students from effective participation in a district's educational program, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students.”*

Welcoming the ELL in your classroom

- Discuss the needs of the ELL with the rest of the class. Ask the class to make him/her feel welcome. Help students with the pronunciation of his/her name.
- Share important events that are celebrated in their culture. This **does not** include Cinco de Mayo.
- Offer resources about the student's country – WITH WARNINGS: UNESCO-Culture, World-Wide Culture E-Resources, Culture Grams
- Ask the teacher to watch for any bullying by other students.
- Assign a buddy student, preferably one who is an English language role model
- Have the buddy show the student around the school.
- Label what you can around the classroom and use visual aids to help explain class rules and expectations.
- Establish routines in the classroom.

Parent teacher conferences

- If you require an interpreter, give plenty of notice to the ESOL staff.
- Avoid using siblings or friends of the family as interpreters.
- Build in extra time for conferences involving interpreters.
- Being on time for conferences may be a concern. You may have to reiterate the importance of being on time.
- Introduce yourself and any other staff member present.
- Use concise sentences.
- Always look at the parent(s) while speaking, not at the interpreter.
- Pause often so the interpreter can keep pace. This will also give the interpreter time to ask the parents if they have questions. Giving too much information at once may cause miscommunication.
- Provide translated materials whenever possible.
- Avoid educational jargon.
- **Always** reinforce the importance of speaking the native language at home.

Second Language Acquisition

- Being proficient in a language includes reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Explain the difference between BISC and CALP.
- Provide a list of English letter sounds not used in other languages. For example: th, sh, and z. Explain that student may omit or substitute other sounds. This is not cause for a special ed. referral.
- Include study findings on how long it takes a child to be proficient in another language and the factors that will effect the process. Virginia Collier has numerous studies to draw from.
- Emphasize the valuable relationship between a strong foundation in a native language and acquiring a second language.
- Provide definitions for the phenomena of The Silent Period, Code Switching, and Negative Transfer.

Teaching strategies

Scaffolding/Sheltered Instruction – SIOP

Visual aids

Enunciate and emphasize key words and phrases. Use body gestures to convey ideas.

Have buddy share notes or give student a copy of yours.

Copy of notes should be printed.

Avoid forcing students to read aloud or speak in class. Small group more effective

Allow additional wait time to answer questions.

Make corrections indirectly by mirroring correct form as a response.

Check for understanding frequently

Prioritize instructional objectives.

Teaching strategies continued

- Modify assignments, ask ESOL staff to help.
- Use cognates whenever possible. Provide examples to the teacher.
- Concentrate and build upon what a student can do, not what he/she can't.
- Use prior knowledge to build additional vocabulary and concepts.
- Use concrete examples avoid abstract.
- Use hands-on activities to allow participation.
- Use the ESOL staff to preview, review, or introduces new vocabulary and concepts with the students.
- Offer word banks for cloze activities. Avoid essay/short answer when possible. Ask ESOL staff to help modify assessments and classwork.

Stumbling Blocks

Idioms

Euphemisms

Multi-meaning words especially those that can be used as a noun or verb

Lack of background knowledge; especially in U.S. history

A student's desire to assimilate into a culture rather than acculturate

Breaks in education due to transient behaviors and needs

Excessive absences due to family responsibilities

Frustration: learning a new language, adjusting to a new country, home sickness, dealing with peer pressure, or learning the hidden rules

Lack of support system at home or at school both

Teacher resources

Provide ESOL websites for different proficiency levels

Provide pre-translated materials to support student efforts and behavior.

Provide resources from the ESOL department.

Offer to meet teacher before or after school or prep time.

Provide computer programs aimed at ELLs to be used in the mainstream classroom.

Realistic expectations

There is no magic wand to increase proficiency levels.

Be patient not only with the student but with yourself. You are just one part of a student's very long journey.

Every ELL, like any other student, learns at his/her own rate and by different teaching strategies.

Some students are learning to read and reading to learn simultaneously. Could you do the same if displaced in another country?

A child does not have a choice where parents move him/her, be careful not to take parental frustrations out on the child.

Having an ELL in the classroom a privilege not a punishment. We can learn a lot from their culture and experiences.

Thank you and keep up all your hard work.

If I can be of any additional assistance, please contact me at:

Judy R. Shreves Ph.D.

Email: judyshreves@sbcglobal.net

Home phone: 314-972-7616

Cell phone: 314-494-6875