

Working with Low Level English Language Learners

I. Start with “need to know” information

A. Phrases for Life

1. My name is _____.
2. My address is _____.
3. I speak _____.
4. I need help.
5. Please call (911, my family member, etc).

B. Phrases for Class

1. I do not understand.
2. Can you slow down?
3. Can you repeat that?
4. How do you say _____?
5. What is this called? (points at something)
6. How do you spell that?

II. Use realistic and authentic materials

A. Clocks, Calendars, Color photos

B. Models, Maps, Menus, Sales Flyers

III. Teach in small chunks

A. Don't overwhelm the student.

B. Only cover as much as the student can easily remember.

IV. Limit written information

- A. Too many words will cause students who are struggling to struggle even more.
- B. Anything written should have short words and short sentences.

V. Engage multiple senses

- A. Sight
 - 1. Text
 - 2. Pictures, graphics
- B. Sound
 - 1. Listening to the teacher, other students, recordings, or videos
 - 2. Singing, rhymes, and clapping to indicate stress.
- C. Touch
 - 1. Handling objects, describing the feel, describing shapes
 - 2. Making/building things, rearranges shapes
- D. Taste & Smell
 - 1. Bring in: food, spices, flowers, perfumes
 - 2. _____
- E. Actions
 - 1. Moving about, gestures
 - 2. Playing physical games,

VI. Avoid teaching grammar terms

- A. Most Low ESL may not recognize these terms from their own languages, there may not.
- B. Use visual cues to represent the same thing (i.e. all verbs on flashcards are highlighted in pink).

VII. Use color to reinforce ideas

- A. Highlighters,
- B. Colored index cards,
- C. Colored photos

VIII. Allow time to process

- A. Silence isn't necessarily bad
- B. Let the student think before jumping in to "help"

IX. Teach the same material in different ways

- A. Hear it
- B. Say it
- C. Read it
- D. Write it
- E. Move it
- F. Manipulate it

X. Repeat and revisit

- A. Repeat new material a few times during the lesson.
- B. Go back after a few weeks, and look at vocabulary and grammar that was learned in previous lessons.