



Secondary English Learner Toolkit

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Supporting Newcomer Students

Newcomers are a special population of English learners who have recently arrived in the United States. They bring rich experiences, languages, and backgrounds that can help them adapt and thrive in a new community. Many also arrive while still building proficiency in English academic language and thus require specific instructional considerations and supports to succeed in and out of school. Effective instruction for newcomers incorporates sustained instruction that supports academic achievement and language development.

Potential Opportunities and Common Challenges of Newcomers	
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connecting students and families to available resources• Building empowering school-family partnerships• Creating school teams to monitor attendance and academic concerns• Keeping expectations and rigor high• Developing student leaders/mentors to support newly arrived peers• Providing flexible scheduling whenever possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adapting to a new country and new processes• Navigating and understanding a new school system• Engaging families/caregivers• Supporting consistent attendance• Reducing historically high dropout rate• Completing graduation requirements• Rolling admissions/midyear entry• Competing responsibilities (e.g., jobs, child care, etc.)

Strategies and Best Practices

Supporting newcomers requires specific instructional considerations as educators seek to balance providing rigorous core content instruction while also prioritizing rapid English language development and proficiency. Strategies that work best with this population integrate communication modes (reading, writing, listening, speaking), foster student-to-student interaction, maintain academic rigor, and showcase student learning. To support newcomers, educators can:

- **Maintain high expectations aligned to standards and tailor instruction and support to what students can do.** Rigorous instruction, rather than oversimplified curriculum, is crucial to newcomers’ success, especially for adolescent newcomers who often have limited time to develop English proficiency and content understanding.
- **Teach, model, and scaffold academic conversations.** Giving time for newcomers to speak and listen to others is essential, as oral language growth is critical for developing literacy. Educators can explicitly teach talk moves, provide related anchor charts and sentence frames, and ensure students have time to talk in class. They can also use strategies such as turn-and-talk to engage students in academic conversations.
- **Teach, model, and scaffold academic writing.** Newcomers need instruction focused on the writing process and on expectations of academic writing in the United States. For example, educators can use an adapted Writing with Colors Protocol to demystify the writing process for newcomers. By using colors to represent elements of good writing, such as the topic/theme, explanation, textual

evidence, and transition words, newcomers are better able to visualize what is needed in a response and use the colors as a “code” for crafting their own.

- **Build background knowledge and connections.** To learn new content, all learners must make connections between their prior knowledge and new concepts, but this is often an added challenge for newcomers because their backgrounds may be different from those presented in the texts and classrooms. Educators can keep in mind that newcomers bring rich experiences and perspectives and tap into this knowledge to support students’ meaning-making in classrooms. Educators can first start by getting to know their students, then incorporating what they know into instruction. For example, they can select fictional or informational texts that connect to students’ backgrounds as well as language and content instruction topics and themes.
- **Incorporate Project-Based Learning (PBL).** PBL is an engaging and effective way to meet the needs of newcomers who are learning both content and language simultaneously. PBL connects critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity to support student learning. It provides newcomers with an opportunity to dive deeper into a topic or concept and showcase understanding. Educators can think critically about projects through communication modes (reading, writing, speaking, listening) to build language throughout the process by asking themselves: What will newcomers read, write, speak, and listen to? How will the project showcase knowledge and skills across communication modes?
- **Ensure aligned grading.** Examine grading policies to ensure they are aligned with content standards and connected to expectations for what newcomers can do across English language proficiency levels. Review grading policies using relevant criteria as a collaborative team (administrators, teachers, family/caregivers, and students) to ensure that newcomers have multiple ways to engage in and demonstrate learning, and that grades reflect relevant factors such as demonstrated learning, effort, motivation, engagement/participation, as well as improvement over time.

Suggestions for Low, Middle, and High-Incidence Systems

Educators across all systems can support newcomers by building on what students can already do, supporting learners through multiple strategies.

Educators serving newcomers in low and mid-incidence systems can:

- Provide staff and educators with professional learning focused on meeting the specialized needs of newcomers, including strategies for supporting students who have recently arrived in the United States.
- Cluster newcomers in classrooms with educators who have demonstrated success in supporting English learners at early English language proficiency levels.

Educators serving newcomers in high-incidence systems can:

- Develop specialized courses and/or programs for newcomers that incorporate literacy development alongside content area and ESL instruction.

- Cluster newcomers who speak similar heritage language(s) in similar classrooms to maximize opportunities for connecting to and drawing from students' strengths and assets.

Supporting SIFEs

Students with interrupted formal education (SIFEs) are English learners (ELs) with little or, in some cases, no formal education, or whose education has been significantly interrupted. SIFEs bring a variety of strengths to learning, including resilience skills resulting from experiencing significant challenges. They also face specific challenges related to their schooling experience, such as limited or no native language literacy and academic skills that are below grade level. To be successful, SIFEs need educators who can identify their assets and provide effective instruction and support that leverage strengths to address remaining linguistic and academic needs.

Potential Strengths and Common Challenges of SIFEs	
Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possesses a wealth of life experience and extensive • pragmatic knowledge • Can be very motivated to learn • Are adept at hands-on work • Collaborate well with others • Can learn at a rapid rate • May be fluent in multiple languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant time constraints to learn English, acquire grade-level academic skills and knowledge, and prepare for standardized tests • May not be able to read or write in their home language • Deficit-based mindsets

Strategies and Best Practices

Successful instruction for SIFEs engages them in rigorous, challenging learning experiences through effective strategies and practices such as:

Asset-based teaching and learning approaches. SIFEs benefit from teaching approaches that take into consideration their assets. Schools can use intake assessments in students' native languages, whenever possible, to identify the skills they already possess. Based on results, educators can consider targeted interventions, placement in specific courses that emphasize basic literacy and numeracy skills, and participation in special programming in addition to grade-level courses. At the classroom level, educators can incorporate native language support, hands-on tasks, scaffolds, and supports to engage with complex text and cooperative learning strategies.

School-based SIFEs support teams. This group of educators can engage in continuous conversations and monitoring of key processes such as SIFE identification, targeted supports, instructional strategies, and academic progress monitoring. In addition, the SIFEs team can communicate its findings to the rest of the school, to ensure SIFEs receive appropriate services that meet their complex needs. This team could include administrators, counselors, and teachers working directly with SIFEs, as well as administrative staff trained to administer intake assessments.

Theme-based and interdisciplinary curriculum and assessment. A theme-based curriculum and assessment design exposes SIFEs to a set of literacy skills and concepts in context. This helps students

connect new learning to what they already know, internalize learning, and use their newly gained knowledge and skills more effectively. If applied school-wide, a thematic curriculum and assessment design can also facilitate the transfer of skills and knowledge, allowing SIFEs to learn faster.

Highly structured instructional strategies. Teachers can use instructional strategies that emphasize routines and task repetition in different contexts to reduce the cognitive load associated with learning new material. These strategies help SIFEs to focus on the academic concepts and skills presented, instead of dedicating significant time to learning how to complete new tasks. These strategies can be applied in all content areas with differentiated scaffolding to support both SIFEs as well as non-SIFE peers. Examples of highly structured instructional strategies include Think-Write-Pair-Shares, Turn-and-Talks, Adapted Writing with Colors, Close Reading Protocol, discussions and debates, and Socratic Seminars.

Project-Based Learning (PBL). PBL provides opportunities to make learning meaningful for SIFEs, who benefit from activities they see as relevant to their lives. These types of projects can be thematically aligned to engage SIFEs in contextualized learning that supports effective language development and grade-level content learning.

Suggestions for Low, Middle, and High-Incidence Systems

Educators serving SIFEs in low and mid-incidence systems can:

- Offer literacy-based after-school or summer programs for SIFEs to help them accelerate their learning towards meeting grade-level standards.
- Implement highly structured instructional strategies in all content areas, providing differentiated scaffolding for SIFEs.

Educators serving SIFEs in high-incidence systems can:

- Develop SIFEs programs with self-contained courses that provide focused instruction in basic literacy and numeracy skills in addition to grade-level content area instruction. These classes would offer SIFEs opportunities to learn academic routines and expectations in their new environment while giving them access to resources and scaffolds that they need to achieve academic success.
- Develop flexible schedules and closely monitor SIFEs' progress to transition students out of literacy-focused courses once students demonstrate mastery of core skills to maximize learning.
 - Capitalize on their skills to accelerate their learning
 - Use the Science of Reading to teach foundational literacy
 - Set goals with SIFEs students, so they feel responsible for their learning
 - Focus on success and growth
 - Involve EL students in the school (outside of EL class)
 - Use visuals and native language supports
 - Help students learn to self-advocate
 - Focus on what students know, not on deficits.

School and Home Connections

Beginning with enrollment, schools have the opportunity to establish connections with SIFEs and help them feel valued within the school.

- SIFEs and/or newcomers could be paired with a mentor student who may have acquired more fluency, who can serve as a positive and ongoing link to the school's culture and norms.
- School teams can also make efforts to meet the families of the SIFEs or newcomers.
- At family meetings, it would be beneficial to have information in the family's home languages about accessing community resources and connecting with the school or system's community partnerships.
- The school may also consider special programming and scheduling for SIFEs and/or newcomer students. SIFEs and newcomers also benefit from best practices in supporting ELs.

Supporting Long-Term English Learners

A long-term English learner (LTEL) is a student who has not been able to attain English proficiency within five years. Students who remain classified as LTELs for extended periods will have more difficulties graduating from high school and becoming college- and career-ready. Efforts and additional support must be made to provide support to LTELs to improve learner outcomes. In many cases, these students remain designated as English learners for long periods because of structural issues such as a lack of access to high-quality instruction promoting their content area, literacy, and language development. Although there is wide variation among this group of students, research suggests LTELs possess a common set of strengths and face somewhat similar challenges that educators can keep in mind when working to promote their success.

Potential Strengths and Common Challenges of Students Designated as LTELs	
Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be self-motivated and able to self-advocate• Can be confident, active learners who perceive themselves as successful learners despite the challenges of• school and poor academic performance• Use resources across two languages to communicate• and make sense of the world (codeswitching, translanguaging, etc.)• Can demonstrate strong academic performance in some academic areas despite not having attained English language proficiency• Possesses strong oral proficiency but may struggle with academic language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need support for leveraging the sophisticated language skills they use in social contexts to academic and instructional contexts• May feel out of place or embarrassed in typical ESL classrooms• May feel and/or act disengaged due to perceived lack of ability to succeed in school• Face barriers to achieving language proficiency (weak or incoherent language development programs, simplified instruction without explicit academic language instruction, deficit-based perceptions, overgeneralized English learner reclassification criteria, etc.)

Meeting the unique needs of Long-Term English Learners:

To best support Long-Term English Learners, schools can:

- Identify the team that will work with the student and provide professional development on strategies for success. This team may include the EL teacher, content teachers, counselors, administrators, social workers, family liaisons, and other specialists such as special education administrators.
- Develop a response protocol to address academic failures that includes working with content teachers to apply strategies from the student's Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) or English Language Acquisition Plan, if applicable.
- Pair content teachers with LTELs as academic mentors.
- Incorporate goal setting with EL students based on their language proficiency scores.
- Build student agency in their learning and support their needs
- Engage parents/caregivers in the process by discussing goals for the student and inviting their input.
- Consider additional needs that might not have been identified previously. Are there indications that learning disabilities exist? Follow a protocol including analyzing classroom teaching practices to ensure supports and, if applicable, accommodations are in place, observation by specialists, communicating with the families, etc.

Strategies and Best Practices

Students designated as LTELs are emergent bilinguals who often possess unidentified and untapped literacy and linguistic abilities they can leverage for success. To support their success, all educators can engage LTELs and their families in investigating factors beyond English language proficiency that influence students' educational experiences to better understand why students remain identified as LTELs, how to leverage their strengths, and co-develop goals that support their success. Additionally, school leaders across contexts (low, middle, or high incidence systems) can:

- Ensure that the overarching conditions needed to support the success of all English learners, including LTELs, are in place.
- Develop an internal definition and process for identifying and supporting students who need additional scaffolding.
- Provide classroom teachers with regular and ongoing professional learning focused on addressing deficit-thinking and learning how to use strategies that promote rigorous standards-based language instruction for students designated as LTELs.
- Provide time for collaboration between ESL teachers and other teachers of LTELs so they can support explicit language and literacy development throughout the day and ensure that the ESL curriculum focuses on the type of academic language that LTELs will need to be successful in content areas.
- Establish a team and processes (regular meetings, data analysis protocols, etc.) to review LTELs' progress and trigger interventions, supports, and/or programmatic and placement changes. Include ESL and content teachers in the team and incorporate LTELs' and their families' input when

reviewing progress (including evidence of student learning such as work samples) and setting goals.

Suggestions for Low, Middle, and High-Incidence Systems

Educators across all systems (low, middle, and high incidence) can implement strategies for supporting students designated as LTELs in ESL instruction, such as intellectually challenging and engaging tasks, activities to promote oracy and literacy development, ample structured opportunities for quality student interactions and cooperative learning, and formative assessment support students at all English proficiency levels (including those at higher proficiency levels) by providing text-rich environments, opportunities to explore and deconstruct mentor/model texts, and explicit connections being made between their first language and English (practices supporting the Features of High-Quality ESL Instruction).

Educators serving LTELs in low and mid-incidence systems can promote literacy and oracy in students' first language and English and use students' first language skills to support English language proficiency development.

Educators serving LTELs in high-incidence systems can:

- promote literacy and oracy in students' first language and English by providing dual language programs with opportunities sequenced through Advanced Placement and college preparatory courses at the secondary levels
- develop specialized courses focused on the needs of students designated as LTELs.

Credits and Scheduling

This guidance is meant for administrators, counselors, content-area educators, and EL Educators, as education of ELs is a partnership among multiple school stakeholders. It is important for administrators to understand the legal requirements for serving ELs. Counselors are often the first contact ELs and families have within the school, and thus need a comprehensive understanding of appropriate courses for ELs, an understanding of how to transfer credits from previous schools, and a thorough knowledge of the legal requirements for the Home Language Survey and providing information in the parents' languages.

ELs at the secondary level face a monumental challenge to acquire a large amount of content while also obtaining English proficiency. This chapter is meant to be a guidance resource and is intended to support but not supersede federal and state regulations regarding ELs. The course and credit requirements for earning a high school diploma apply to all Louisiana students, including ELs. Schools may utilize the information within this chapter as guidance to appropriately offer credit to ensure that ELs are immediately earning credit toward graduation, placed in appropriate grade levels and courses with support, and develop college and career readiness.

Enrollment Process

It is essential to have a defined process for enrolling potential ELs. To begin, understanding the rights of enrolling students is paramount. Important guidelines are listed below.

- Children less than 18 years of age in Louisiana must be enrolled in school.
- Students cannot be denied enrollment for lacking a birth certificate or for their citizenship status.
- Students up to 20 years of age, including ELs, have a constitutional right to attend school until they receive a high school diploma. Receipt of a High School Equivalency Diploma (HSE) is not equivalent to a high school diploma and does not extinguish the right to earn a high school diploma.
- If a school determines an adult student should attend school in an alternate setting, such as online credit recovery or evening classes, then this setting must allow the student the opportunity to earn credit toward graduation. For example, a student well over 18 might be required to attend adult education classes rather than high school, but this student cannot be denied the right to attend school and earn a diploma. Per the Compulsory School Attendance law, a student is required to attend school until the age of 18.
- At the high school level, proper age placement is achieved by enrolling the student. However, the grade or cohort of the EL will be determined after evaluating student transcripts and assessing the student's prior education to determine credits. The EL director or teacher should be involved in the entire process. First, a clear idea of the student's educational background should be examined and discussed to provide the most appropriate programming and support. Other important factors involve identifying the sequence of mathematics in the student's home country, as this is typically different outside of the United States, as well as what the student's goals are in post-secondary education.
- Below is a list of the various classifications of ELs.
 - A newcomer is a student who has enrolled in U.S. schools for the first time.
 - A SIFE student is a student with limited and interrupted formal education.
 - An LTEL is a long-term English learning, meaning the student has not attained proficiency within the given time frame of five years.

Evaluating Foreign Transcripts

Awarding credits based on transfer transcripts is a local decision. Every effort should be made to honor credit and achievement from the student's previous schooling or current performance. This may involve the use of hired translators, school staff, system staff, family discussions, research into previous schooling systems, or a combination of the above.

Obtaining and translating transcripts

The first step for any school, system, or external evaluator is to obtain the transcripts. However, requesting transcripts from students' home countries can be a lengthy process. Additionally, students may not have records from previous schools, or their records may be difficult to authenticate. The following strategies can help improve the process of obtaining and translating international transcripts:

- Centralize the intake process for newcomer students in the system office or a newcomer center, where staff members have experience working with students from other countries and often speak one of the most represented languages.

- If in-house translation is not possible, contract with outside agencies or refer families to consulates or community resources such as refugee or immigrant centers, or other community groups that can provide translation services.
- Re-create students' academic histories if transcripts are missing. Gather key information, such as course names, hours of instructional time, length of courses, and grades obtained. Use structured interviews with students and families to gather additional information about academic history and course content. Interpreting prior schooling experiences

Translating course names is usually not enough to evaluate international transcripts, as identically named courses completed in another country may vary in key characteristics, such as content, hours of instruction, and grading practices. To accurately interpret the courses listed on a transcript, systems must have current and accurate information about the corresponding country's education system. Here are some ways to help ensure international transcripts are correctly interpreted:

- Standardize course equivalencies by gathering detailed information about education systems in the countries your newcomer students are most likely to come from.
- Periodically update advisors' knowledge of education systems in students' home countries and document the new information.
- Consider utilizing a foreign credential evaluation service for professional interpretation of international transcripts.

Making decisions about credit transfer and placement

The final step in international transcript evaluation is determining the value of students' past coursework, in terms of the number of allowable transfer credits and how previous coursework will be applied to graduation requirements. Standardized procedures for awarding credit are critical to ensure all newcomer students receive fair and consistent treatment. Systems should develop clear guidelines and policies that specify:

- Who is responsible for the evaluation of international transcripts
- Allowable substitutions and waivers for courses required for graduation, by subject area
- How credits should be recorded on the cumulative record, as well as the course titles and numbers that should be used
- Guidelines for converting grades to the 4.0 scale
- How the language of instruction impacts credit transfer, if applicable (e.g., does a language arts class taken in a language other than English count for language arts credit, world language credit, or elective credit?)
- The role of exams
- The process for students and families to appeal the system's credit-awarding decision, and ensuring this process is clearly communicated to families.

Awarding Credit for Proficiency Without Completing Coursework

Students may receive high school credit in multiple ways, including using alternatives to traditional seat time. The school should honor the student's current proficiency in order to place students in appropriate classes that meet the needs of the student and increase the likelihood of on-time graduation. In this

model, students demonstrate proficiency in order to receive credit. When awarding credit by proficiency, by using an exam or portfolio, it must be reported to LDOE. For instance, students transferring from another country will often speak another language and can receive credits for native language skills by utilizing the world language-approved course titles, including the other world language course title for the description of low-incidence languages. A school may wish to use a local or third-party assessment for the student to demonstrate proficiency. Students who are able to demonstrate literacy skills in English and a world language may qualify for [Louisiana's Seal of Biliteracy](#).

Secondary EL Enrollment Checklist

To appropriately schedule secondary English learners, understanding the complete educational background of the EL is of the utmost importance.

- ☐ Thoroughly review prior transcripts, including translation, if necessary, to award all credits possible and appropriately identify the proper placement of the student.
- ☐ Ask for a detailed explanation of math coursework done in other countries, as multiple concepts might be included within one math course.
- ☐ With the assistance of a student's family or guardians, determine students' graduation plans and necessary coursework.
- ☐ Explain the school's grading system as well as the various pathways toward graduation.
- ☐ Review requirements for graduation from the local system and those for post-secondary entrance to college or vocational training.
- ☐ Ensure that each student is placed in the appropriate graduation cohort and make a note to check back on progress within one month to ensure proper placement was made.
- ☐ Provide instructions to access an online gradebook to parents in a language that is accessible for them to understand.
- ☐ Review important school policies, attendance policies, transportation policies, and how to navigate the cafeteria.
- ☐ Provide the EL and parents with a list of extracurricular activities and clubs offered through the school, as well as available opportunities for parents to become involved.
- ☐ Assign a peer buddy to assist the new English learner during the first day of school.

Coursework for English Learners at the Secondary Level

English learners at the secondary level bring the assets of their home language and prior experiences to our classrooms. A well-developed graduation plan that allows an EL to develop his or her English alongside challenging coursework that will lead to post-secondary goals is imperative to have in place from the day that the EL arrives at the high school. This graduation plan should be developed with the EL and the parents/caregivers of the EL. This plan should also be reevaluated each semester as the student continues to make progress.

Differentiation for Secondary English Learners

Key Points:

- Differentiation is done through all parts of a lesson, not just for the assessments.
- For English learners, differentiation must take into account students’ levels in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- English learners are still required to learn the content and standards. Differentiation is used to make the language accessible.
- English learners must be provided with a grade like other students within the classroom.

Differentiation Defined

The term differentiation refers to a wide variety of teaching techniques and lesson adaptations that educators use to ensure that students acquire the necessary content within the same course, classroom, or learning environment. Simplified, differentiation is tailoring instruction to meet the needs of individual students. The content, the process, the end products, and even the learning environment can be differentiated. An educational atmosphere that includes the use of formative assessments and flexible grouping is the most conducive for differentiation. Finally, it is important to note that differentiation in no way means lowering expectations for English learners within content-area classrooms.

Teachers can differentiate at least four classroom elements based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile. The four classroom elements are content, process, product, and learning environment. It is important to note here that differentiating is not simply making modifications to assessments. Differentiation must be involved in the planning stages through the final, summative assessment.

Differentiation			
Content: What is to be learned	Process: How students acquire information	Product: How students demonstrate learning	Learning Environment: Where and with whom the students learn

Differentiating Content

ELs are capable of acquiring the same content standards as native English-speaking students, with educator support and targeted differentiation. ELs and other students might have varying levels of background knowledge concerning a topic.

Strategies that can be used to differentiate content include the following:

- pre-teaching vocabulary
- building background knowledge
- use of supplemental and varied materials
- constant comprehension checks
- multiple formative assessments.

When looking at the course reading materials, it is helpful to build a library of supplemental texts (including bilingual texts when appropriate) on course topics, but that are written at various reading levels. When considering secondary learners, supplemental reading materials that exist at a lower reading level

should be age-appropriate and high-interest in order to be beneficial. Common works that are used in middle school/high school ELA classrooms may be offered in simplified language or in graphic novel formats. When teaching content in secondary classrooms, ideas should be presented in both auditory and visual manners for ELs. Educators can use recordings of text materials or text-to-speech extension apps that include language translation for ELs.

Visuals are constants at the elementary level; however, at the secondary level, the power of visuals is often replaced by lecture and whole-group direct instruction. Visuals and graphic organizers help students acquire academic vocabulary. Some examples include concept webs, semantic gradients, Frayer models, and sketch notes.

Differentiating Process

To differentiate the process for secondary ELs, educators must create differentiated activities in which students will engage to reach content mastery. When differentiating the process, educators must utilize effective questioning techniques, compact the curriculum, provide flexible pacing, provide a variety of grouping structures, and incorporate multiple instructional strategies. The concept of scaffolding encompasses much of what is needed to differentiate the process.

Scaffolding

Scaffolding within the classroom is essential for students to gain proficiency in the academic content. If ELs are constantly given simplified assignments that provide no challenge or high expectations, then academic growth will stagnate, leading to such issues as long-term ELs (LTEs). It is important for educators to understand that scaffolds are essential with new content and with lower levels of English proficiency; however, for growth to occur, scaffolds also need to be removed as students learn more language. Scaffolding should be considered while planning a lesson and then implemented while delivering the lesson. The three categories of scaffolds are the following: materials and resources, instruction, and student grouping. Below is a scaffolding planning template.

Categories of Scaffolds	Possible Scaffold
Materials and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Graphic organizers- These will likely need to be paired with other scaffolds such as manipulatives.● English and/ or bilingual glossaries- These should be student-friendly.● English/ and or bilingual dictionaries● Home language materials- Examples include supplemental texts, translations, videos, and bilingual materials.● Sentence frames, sentence stems, and paragraph frames● Visuals● Word banks or word walls
Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pre-identified and pre-taught vocabulary● Concise instruction of background knowledge● Reduced linguistic load, repetition, paraphrasing, and modeling

Categories of Scaffolds	Possible Scaffold
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified/ elaborated language
Student Grouping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured pair work • Structured small-group work • Teacher-led small-group work

There are five steps to developing scaffolded lesson plans. These five steps are to (1) know your ELs, (2) analyze the language demands of the lesson, (3) plan the lesson, (4) select and develop appropriate materials, and (5) teach the lesson, adapting scaffolding and materials as needed. These steps show that considerations for ELs must be made throughout an entire lesson or unit. Knowing your ELs means understanding their backgrounds. For example, knowing the level of proficiency of a student in his or her language is important. Discovering an EL's strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes will also prove to be beneficial within the classroom. Understanding the EL's individual proficiency levels by language domain will help to plan activities and groupings, as a student can be a 4.2 in listening while being a 2.4 in writing. When analyzing the potential EL needs of a lesson, it is helpful to note the academic language along with any language structures that might need additional attention.

When planning a lesson, there are probably varying levels of ELs within your classroom. Be sure to identify scaffolds that can be used at each level. The same scaffold should not be used for an entering proficiency level that is used for an expanding level. When selecting materials, be sure that the materials are age-appropriate and at an accessible reading level. Use of home language supports is beneficial. Pre-teaching the academic vocabulary and creating scaffolds for more challenging materials will allow ELs access to the content. The final step is to teach the lesson. While teaching the lesson, there will be instances where one might see that a scaffold is needed or where it is time to remove scaffolds so that ELs can grow. Below is a checklist to assist in the planning process.

Checklist Statement	Yes	No
1. I know the strengths and needs of each EL in relation to the language demands of the lesson.		
2. I have identified areas of language that might be demanding for my ELs.		
3. I have developed lists of key vocabulary to pre-teach and created opportunities for practice.		
4. I have determined the language objectives of focus for this lesson.		
5. I have determined what background knowledge might be missing and needs to be addressed.		
6. I have created multiple grouping structures that will support the acquisition of content and language objectives.		
7. I have included practice opportunities in each of the four domains: speaking, reading, writing, and listening.		
8. As appropriate, I have found home language resources for support.		
9. I have developed a variety of scaffolded materials to address the varied levels of proficiency within my classroom.		

Checklist Statement	Yes	No
10. I have established how I will assess learning and how the assessment will be scaffolded for ELs of differing proficiency levels.		

Differentiating Products

At the end of a lesson or unit, students apply or extend knowledge acquired in the form of a culminating project or assessment. It is important that clear directions, written and spoken, are provided for all assessments. Allowing the use of the student's home language for descriptions would be beneficial as well. Creating opportunities that will lead to products that reflect authentic, real-world applications will benefit all students, including ELs.

Authentic Assessments for English Learners

Authentic assessments include a variety of measures that can be adapted for different situations. These are examples of authentic assessments.

Assessment	Description	Advantages
Oral Interviews	The teacher asks students questions about personal background, activities, readings, and interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal and relaxed content • Conducted over successive days with each student • Record observations on an interview guide • Student produces oral report • Can be scored on content or language components • Scored with a rubric or rating scale • Can determine reading strategies and language development
Story or Test Retelling	Students retell the main idea or selected details of the text experiences through listening or reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student produces a written document • Can be scored on content or language components • Scored with a rubric or rating scale • Can determine writing processes
Writing Samples	Students generate a narrative, expository, persuasive, or reference paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students make a formal presentation, a written report, or both • Can observe oral and written products and thinking skills • Scored with a rubric or rating scale • Students make an oral presentation, a written report, or both
Projects/Exhibitions	Students complete the project in content area, working individually or in pairs	
Experiments/ Demonstrations	Students complete, experiment, or demonstrate use of materials	

Assessment	Description	Advantages
Constructed-Response Items	Students respond in writing to open-ended questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student produces a written report • Usually scored on substantive information and thinking skills • Scored with a rubric or rating scale
Teacher Observations	The teacher observes the student attention, response to instructional materials, or interactions with others students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students make an oral presentation, a written report, or both • Can observe oral and written products and thinking skills • Scored with a rubric or rating scale
Portfolios	Focused collection of student's work to show progress over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates information from a number of sources • Gives an overall picture of the student

Classroom Supports

Implementing instructional as well as linguistic support helps ELs to grow in proficiency and to close the achievement gap. Below is a compilation of examples for both instructional and linguistic supports that can be used by the classroom teachers.

Instructional Supports	Linguistic Supports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative learning • Jigsaw activities • Use of prior knowledge • Memorization strategies • Note-taking strategies • Summarization techniques • Shortened assignments • Provide flexible timelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified language • Reading aloud directions • Translated directions • Audio recordings of lessons • Rephrasing • Elaborate language • Allow verbal or written assignments • Highlight key words, phrases, or sentences

Supports vs. Modifications

Supports	Modifications
<p>Changes to the format of content for ELs that does not lower expectations or change the construct, but it does give access for the student. Supports facilitate access to content. Support for ELs is intended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide scaffolding • Reduce linguistic load • Apply linguistic resources to content 	<p>Changes to reduce learning or assessment expectations. Examples of modifications include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not giving assignments and removing The responsibility of the content • Providing hints or clues during assessments • Providing fewer objectives • Only requiring the easiest problems to be completed

The difference between the concepts of classroom supports and classroom modifications is the last area to be addressed within the area of differentiating products. Supports do not alter the skills or knowledge being assessed, nor do they lower expectations or standards for ELs. When educators teach the same content with the addition of scaffolding to allow ELs access to the content, this is considered to be a support. Classroom novels or readings can be another example. Utilizing graphic novels, audio recordings, versions in the native language, or movie clips that might be modernized versions of the content are all examples of linguistic supports for ELs.

A modification differs from support in that there are actual changes that are made to the content that is being taught. Because modifications alter or lower expectations or standards of instructional level or content, teachers should look to provide one of the various types of linguistic or instructional supports instead for ELs. It is crucial that the standards are still being met and that ELs are provided with grades and credits for their work.

Differentiating the Learning Environment

The learning environment of the classroom is reflective of how the classroom works and feels. Educators can develop routines that allow students to make transitions and to start lessons. Educators are most successful when time is taken to truly learn about students and to allow time for all students to share and learn about one another. It is important to understand that many ELs may have internalized different norms, such as procedures for questioning, for challenging opinions, or even for volunteering to speak within a classroom discussion. Taking the time to know and understand all students will lead to success for ELs within the mainstream classrooms.

