Literacy Guidelines for ELs: The TOOL

Literacy Guidelines for ELLs
Supporting the Development of Language and Literacy for Emergent Bilinguals

BUILD LITERACY

How can I differentiate instruction to build comprehension skills for all students?

PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE READING AND WRITING INSTRUCTION

Integrate all the literacy components into contextualized instruction: oral language development, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, word study, fluency, and the writing process in context.

USE AND PRODUCE EXPOSITORY AND NARRATIVE TEXTS

Use a variety of texts to expose students to text features, academic language, purposes and styles. Include literary, informational and technical writing in your teaching. Guide students in producing texts by using a wide range of examples.

EXPAND LITERACY

How do I use literacy to push students to broaden their content knowledge?

SUPPORT BROAD AND NARROW READING OF TEXTS

Encourage students to read widely across genres and subjects to broaden their background knowledge and expand their vocabulary. Support students in reading deeply on topics of interest to connect to prior knowledge and experience.

BUILD KNOWLEDGE OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

Teach vocabulary directly as well as strategies for learning words to encourage word awareness. Use their expanding academic vocabulary to engage students in developing understanding and production of academic discourse.

CREATE LITERACY

How can I promote critical thinking to create deeper literacy experiences for my students?

THINK TO READ, READ TO THINK

Develop literacy and language through supporting students thinking as they engage in reading. Model and expect students to use thinking strategies as they read. Build reading competence by promoting critical thinking and metacognition.

THINK TO WRITE, WRITE TO THINK

Writing is a process that naturally facilitates thinking. Teach writing as a tool that makes thinking visible and knowledge explicit. Model writing strategies to promote thinking.

Teacher/Student ELL Literacy Strategies

BUILD LITERACY

PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE READING AND WRITING INSTRUCTION

- Model, scaffold, and guide practice with feedback
- Visualize what they read
- Active questioning
- Make interferences and predictions
- Retell and summarize to recall information
- Activate background knowledge
- Use think-alouds to improve comprehension
- Connect reading to other texts, students' lives, and the world
- Teach sentence combining to understand complex texts and produce complex writing
- Connect reading and writing assignments
- Develop oral language
- Focus on the paragraph level to teach cohesive and coherent writing
- Teach conjunctions to connect sentences and give cohesion
- Dialogue journals
- Emphasize grammar in context
- Use authentic and meaningful sources to teach sentence structure
- Teach paraphrasing by rewriting academic texts in everyday language
- Rewrite everyday language into academic language
- Provide clear models for student writing

USE AND PRODUCE EXPOSITORY AND NARRATIVE TEXTS

- Teach students strategies to read expository texts early
- Supplement textbooks with informational texts
- Teach students to analyze texts
- Connect reading to the outside world
- Apply content knowledge to their lives
- Build on student interest and connect intrinsic motivation to reading
- Teach tone, style, structure, and features of expository and narrative texts
- Use signal or cue words to identify text types
- Use graphic organizers to organize information
- Explicitly teach text structures
- Identify key components of the text

EXPAND LITERACY

SUPPORT BROAD AND NARROW READING OF TEXTS

- Promote engagement with many interesting texts
- Create knowledge goals to help students investigate big questions
- Make connections to students' lives
- Create a safe and responsive classroom
- Ask students to interact with the text and each other
- Provide a rich variety of interesting books
- Compile text sets (collection of books, magazines, Internet articles, etc)
- Use jigsaw activities
- Support choice which leads to great motivation and engagement
- Evaluate the importance of different ideas
- Model good reading strategies

BUILD KNOWLEDGE OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

- Foster word consciousness
- Teach individual words in a variety of ways
- Provide rich and varied language experiences
- Teach word-learning strategies
- Exposure to meaningful English
- Extensive reading opportunities
- Targeted instruction of content-specific vocabulary
- Purposely use words in class discussions
- Use consistent, research-based methods
- Provide oral language and literacy development
- Have students work in various types of groups regularly
- Build on previous knowledge
- Notice words in different contexts
- Use graphic representations
- Visualize the relationships of words
- List related words
- Explicitly teach context clues when teaching new words
- Use word parts to teach new words
- Understand, model and teach the characteristics of academic language
- Create word clusters
- Identify cognates and false cognates
- Teach academic language as a tool that promotes a certain kind of thinking

CREATE LITERACY

THINK TO READ, READ TO THINK

- Use critical thinking to actively construct meaning from various interpretations of text
- Make judgements about the text before, during, and after reading
- Use peer interaction to increase text comprehension
- Use context embedded, cognitively demanding texts
- Teach strategic reading for each content area
- Use text features to identify and connect big ideas from the text
- Provide structured activities around readings
- Use read-alouds beyond current reading ability
- Promote critical thinking in close reading activities
- Analyze text style and ideas represented
- Analyze text style and ideas represented

THINK TO WRITE, WRITE TO THINK

- Have meaningful conversations about text content, language, and structure
- Share analysis of text content, language, and structure in groups
- Co-construct knowledge with other students
- Create meaningful and relevant writing assignments
- Teach process writing/use writer's workshops
- Notice Think to Read, Read to Think strategies in texts to transfer to writing
- Use visual organizers to help make thinking visual and ideas concrete
- Use L1 to promote critical thinking
- Provide shared, guided, and interactive writing experiences