



Strengthening the Reading Rope

Exercising Best Practices for English Learners (ELs)






Stephanie Mollett
MDE Literacy Coach

Renee' Buckley
MDE Literacy Coach



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mdek12.org
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Mississippi Department of Education

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VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community



2

State Board of Education

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

3

1

ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas

2

EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career

3

EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

4


EVERY School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

5

EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

6

EVERY School and District is Rated "C" or Higher



3

Session Goals

4

- Gain understanding of how to comply with current state and federal laws for educating English Learners (ELs)
- Recognize and embrace the diversity of your classroom culture
- Determine the importance of providing structured daily instruction through explicit, systematic routines for each component of Scarborough's Reading Rope
- Develop activities to enhance instruction on the components of the Reading Rope
- Explore strategies to ensure that every child is receiving effective literacy instruction



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State and Federal Guidelines



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Federal Initiatives and Guidelines

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- **Bilingual Education Act of 1968:** First federal legislation that addressed teaching students with limited English proficiency
- **No Child Left Behind:** Established English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act (Title III)
- **Every Student Succeeds Act:** Requires every state to report entrance and exit criteria for English Learners (ELs) language and learning status to secure resources for these students



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Federal Guidelines
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Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015



Affects all students in public schools


- Students in poverty
- Students of color
- Students who receive special education services
- Students with limited English language skills



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State Guidelines
8

Based on ESSA, Mississippi created guidelines in 2018




State Regulations

Funding Guidelines

Instructional Supports

Administrative Supports


Resources for Administrators and Teachers




8

Mississippi English Learners (ELs) and the Literacy-Based Promotion Act
9

What do you know?



- Do English Learners (ELs) who have been in a public school in the United States for two years or longer must pass the 3rd Grade MAAP-ELA or the 3rd Grade Reading Alternative Assessment? **True**
- If a student is officially identified as an English Learner (EL) and has not been retained, would he or she qualify for a Good Cause Exemption? **True**
- Is an Individualized Reading Plan required for English Learner (EL) students who have been identified as having a "substantial reading deficiency"? **True**



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English Learners (ELs) As Defined By Every Student Succeeds Act

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- A student, aged 3 through 21, who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school and was not born in the United States or whose native language is something other than English
- A Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas
- A student who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency



(MS English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance and Instructional Supports 2018)



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English Learners (ELs) As Defined By Every Student Succeeds Act

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- A migratory student, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant
- A student whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual
 - the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments
 - the ability to successfully perform where classroom instruction is delivered in English
 - the opportunity to participate fully in society

(MS English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance and Instructional Supports 2018)



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Types of English Language Learners (ELs) and Their Characteristics

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Type of English Learner (EL)	Characteristics
Newly Arrived with Adequate Schooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent arrivals (less than 3 years in the United States) • Adequate schooling in native country • Catch up academically with relative ease • Tendencies to score lower on standardized testing
Newly Arrived with Limited Formal Schooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent arrivals • Interrupted or limited schooling in native country • Limited native language literacy • Below grade level in math • Poor academic achievement
Long-Term English Learner (EL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below grade level in reading and writing • Mismatch between student perception of achievement and actual grades • Some have adequate proficiency but score low on tests • Have had EL instruction, but inconsistent instructional models



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English Learner (EL) Compliance in Mississippi

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Enroll (ELs) in school	Regardless of the actual citizenship, perceived citizenship, or immigration status of the student, parent or guardian.	
Identify and administer assessments	Based on home language survey	Using the LAS Links Placement Test
Provide ELs with language support	A language program and access to academic content	(MTSS Language Service Plan)
Ensure meaningful communication with parents of ELs	Provide interpreters as needed with translated resources	
Provide ELs with educational support	Other program services (IRP if significant deficit on Universal Screener)	

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MDE Contacts for Support

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Scan for access to the English Learner page on the MDE Website

- **Sandra Elliott**, English Learner Student Intervention Support Specialist (Pre-K – 12)
- **Sharon Prestridge**, EL Program Coordinator (Office of Student Assessment)
- **Dr. Melissa Levy-Jackson**, Title III State Coordinator, Office of Federal Programs

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Understanding Culture

15

Understanding Culture: Origin

16

What is the student's country of origin?

Nationality comes with pride

What are the cultural norms of the country of origin?

Religion, ethnic groups, social customs

Is a public education system available there?

Parents'/Guardians' level and/or students' exposure



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Understanding Culture: Origin

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This helps educators:

- Understand why the students are here
- Recognize the language/dialect spoken at home
- Ensure everyone understands the student's differences
- Create positive interactions and a safe environment for sharing thoughts
- Share what help is available for immigrants and support them as much as possible



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Understanding Culture: Language

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- Understanding home language will support how the teacher sets up an English Learner (EL) friendly classroom
- Phonemic awareness for each language is key
- Phoneme charts in the student's language can help you understand why English acquisition is difficult for them
- Dialects differ in **every** language
- **Correct name pronunciation demonstrates respect**



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Understanding Language and Reading

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Oral language development sets the foundation for the development of reading.

- Reading requires strong language skills for comprehension.
- To plan effective instruction, you must understand the stages of language acquisition and development of reading.

(Cardenas-Hagen, 2020)



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Understanding Stages of Second Language Acquisition

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Stages	Approximate Word Knowledge	Classroom Responses
Stage 1: Silent or Preproduction	New and knows about 500 words	Responses are nonverbal or gestures
Stage 2: Early Production	Increased comprehension and knows around 1000 words	Responses are short yes and no answers
Stage 3: Speech Emergence	Use simple sentences knows around 3000 words	Responds with simple sentences with grammatical errors
Stage 4: Intermediate Language Proficiency	Comprehends around 6000 words	Responds with complex sentences and can ask for clarification
Stage 5: Advanced Language Proficiency	Can fully participate in academic setting	Responds and writes with appropriate grammar and vocabulary

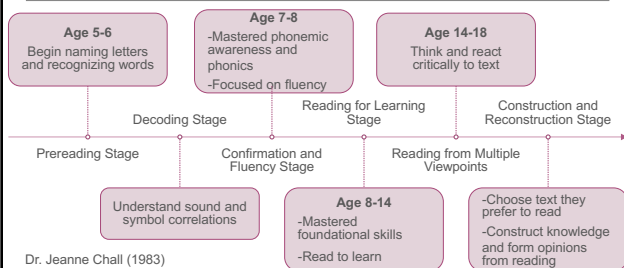
Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell (1983)



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Understanding Stages of Reading Development

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Understanding Culture: Education

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Knowing **who** you are teaching matters as much as **what** you are teaching!

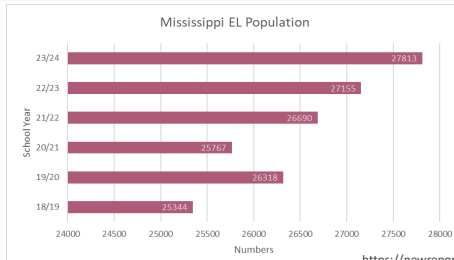
- Know the grade level
- Compare the grade level to the chronological age
- Seek transcripts
- Determine gaps in attendance



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English Learner Populations in Mississippi

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Turn and Talk

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How does cultural understanding help?

- It allows you to tap into your student's background knowledge.
- It allows you to find ways to relate to them beyond the textbook.
- Research and understanding goes a long way in building a collaborative classroom.



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Exercising Effective Instruction

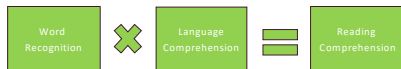


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Moving to Structured Literacy

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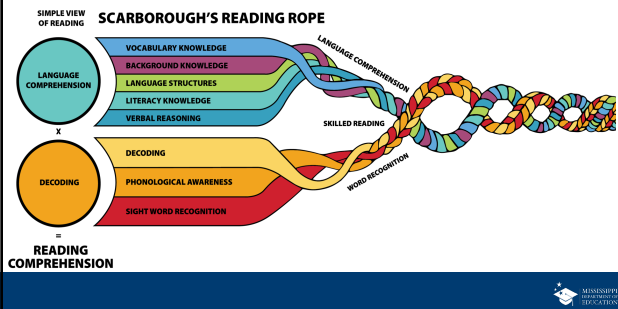
Structured literacy instruction addresses all the foundational elements that are critical for reading comprehension, as outlined in the Simple View of Reading & and the Scarborough Reading Rope model, including both word recognition/decoding and oral language skills (International Dyslexia Association, 2023).



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Components of Structured Literacy

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The Decoding Strands of Scarborough's Reading Rope 28









Decoding Accurately translating words from print to speech	Phonological Awareness Ability to perceive and use the sound structure of words	Sight Word Recognition The ability to recognize commonly used words (with regular and irregular spelling patterns) on sight
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The Language Comprehension Strands of Scarborough's Reading Rope 29

 Vocabulary Knowledge Knowledge about the meaning and pronunciation of words	 Background Knowledge Concepts to associate meaning and terms before reading	 Language Structures Knowledge of the syntax and semantics of oral and written language	 Literacy Knowledge Awareness of print concepts and genre	 Verbal Reasoning Ability to inference and use figurative language
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Let's Get Exercising








Implementing the Decoding Strands for English Learners (ELs)




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Phonological Awareness

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 <p>Rhyming Identifying and producing words that rhyme</p>	 <p>Onset and Rime Isolating the initial sound from the rest of the word</p>	 <p>Alliteration Noticing beginning sound repetition</p>	 <p>Syllables Counting the number of syllables in a word</p>	 <p>Phonemic Awareness Ability to identify and manipulate small speech sounds in words</p>
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Strategies for Developing Rhyming Skills

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<p>Identifying Rhymes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say 2 words or show pictures and have students identify if the words rhyme Using nursery rhymes, have students participate in echoing them and identifying words that rhyme 	<p>Generating Rhymes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use 2 pictures, say the words, have the students say another word that rhymes with that word Utilize word families (i.e., hat, sat, mat) Have students predict the final rhyme in nursery rhymes
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Strategies for Developing Onset and Rime

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<p>Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize motions while identifying and introducing the skill i.e., tap shoulder for onset and slide the rime down your arm. Provide pictures of word families where students match onset with rime.
<p>Scaffolds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize flashcards of the rime. Dictate words that end in the same pattern i.e., cat, hat, mat, rat. Have students create their words based on rime patterns they are given.



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Strategies for Developing Alliteration

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Steps	Scaffolds	Examples
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start with beginning sounds that are common to the home language. 2. Model and have students echo alliterations. 3. Ask students to identify the common sound. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start the alliterations and give word choices for the endings. • Have students generate alliterations based on targeted sounds i.e., /d/. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debbie destroys donuts downtown.

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Strategies for Teaching Syllables for English Learners (ELs)

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Syllable Awareness	Syllable Identification	Syllable Blending
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing that words can be segmented into smaller units • Each of these units has a vowel sound, and vowel sounds are voiced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students put their hand under their chin • Identify how many times their jaw drops as they say a word 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say words in segments, have students say the whole word <i>/jell/ /lo/- jello</i> • Utilize compound words for syllable deletion

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Phonemic Awareness Teaching Strategies

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Phoneme Isolation: the ability to identify a sound within a word • The word is cat, say cat, now let's sound it out /c/ /a/ /t/
Phoneme Identity: the ability to recognize common sounds in various words • The word is cat, say cat, what is the first sound you hear in cat? /c/
Phoneme Deletion and Substitution: the ability to manipulate phonemes • The word is meat, say meat, now say it without the /m/ (eat) • The word is meat, say meat, now change the /m/ to /s/ what the word? seat
Phoneme Blending: the ability to blend individual sounds and form words • Say /c/ /a/ /t/ what's the word? cat

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Phonological Awareness Theories for English Learners (ELs)

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<p>Unified Competition Theory- English Learners (ELs) are sensitive to common phonological characteristics across languages and will transfer their knowledge to their second language leading to positive and negative transfer.</p>	<p>Positive transfer results when phonological development emerges at a more rapid rate in bilingual children than monolingual children.</p>
<p>Negative transfer is when knowledge of the native language results in errors in the second language.</p>	<p>Teachers should be aware of consonants and vowels that are not shared by both languages and allow for extra time when learning those letters and sounds.</p>



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[illegible]

Alphabet Differences to Understand

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Alphabet	Features
The English Alphabet	
The Spanish Alphabet	
The Arabic Alphabet	
The Vietnamese Alphabet	
The Cantonese Alphabet	


Scan for access to
ASHA's *Phonemic Inventories and Cultural and Linguistic Information Across Languages*




38

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Pumping Up the Letters



- Phonics adds the letters to the sounds.
- English Learners (ELs) (ELs) benefit from explicit instruction in phonics.
- Phonics skills support language development for reading and writing.



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Phonics Strategies for English Learners (ELs)

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Explicit, systematic, sequential phonics instruction should:

- Teach a set of letter-sound relations.
- Blend sounds to read words.
- Practice by reading decodable texts.
- Apply phonics skills as children read and write.
- Use systematic assessments to inform instruction.
- Demonstrate and practice with the six syllable types and patterns.
- Identify where syllable types and syllable division fit into instruction.
- Encourage students to become 'word detectives'.



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Phonics Classroom Strategies for English Learners (ELs) —Letter Names

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Teach students the names of the letters in the English alphabet, recognizing that the letters that are not in their own home language may need extra practice.

- ✓ Sing alphabet songs.
- ✓ Utilize individual alphabet for each student.
- ✓ Provide letter manipulatives for building alphabet.
- ✓ Ask students to tell you the letter before or after and use complete sentences in responses.
- ✓ Play "Guess Who" with students and they must generate questions about the letter. Examples: Is it a consonant? Is it a vowel? Does it come at the beginning of the alphabet?



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Phonics Classroom Strategies for English Learners (ELs) —Grapho-Phonemic Knowledge

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Letter-Sound Correspondence is very important for emergent readers.

- ✓ Implement explicit routines for letters and sounds: 3 words that start with the same sound, have students repeat the words and tell the sound and the letter at the beginning of each word.
- ✓ Incorporate explicit letter sound card routines (found in High Quality Instructional Materials) say the letter, state the keyword, say the sound it makes.
- ✓ Utilize mirrors during small group instruction so English Learners (ELs) can see if their mouth is making the correct shape for each sound.
- ✓ Have sound walls posted for visual references.
- ✓ Provide decodable readers to reinforce skills in practice.



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Phonics Classroom Strategies for English Learners (ELs) —Syllable Types

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Explicit Instruction of the Six Syllable Types will provide English Learners (ELs) with the ability to decode thousands of words.

- ✓ Utilize sequential order when teaching the syllable types.
- ✓ Be aware of syllable types of their home language so you can scaffold instruction for unfamiliar types.
- ✓ Use motions for identifying syllables i.e., hand under chin to feel the mouth drop or clapping/tapping.
- ✓ Provide anchor charts for visual references of the syllable types and instructions for coding.
- ✓ Provide decodable readers to reinforce skills in practice.



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Phonics Classroom Strategies for English Learners (ELs) —Morphological Awareness

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Build an understanding that words can have small units of meaning called morphemes.

- ✓ Teach students that morphemes can be prefixes, root, base word, or suffix.
- ✓ Be aware of cognates not transferable from home languages.
- ✓ Utilize a systematic explicit routine for teaching morphemes.
- ✓ Use anchor charts for visual references of the morphemes as they are taught.
- ✓ Provide decodable readers to reinforce skills in practice.



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Phonics Overview

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- ✓ Utilize systematic sequential explicit instruction for all phonics skills.
- ✓ Incorporate cross-language connections when possible.
- ✓ Teach the 6 syllable types, how to recognize them, and code them.
- ✓ Provide morphology instruction to further decoding skills.
- ✓ Use decodable readers to reinforce skills as they are taught.
- ✓ Regularly assess skills and provide remediation for skills not mastered.



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Fluency and English Learners (ELs)

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Fluency is the ability to read with sufficient speed, accuracy, and prosody to support comprehension.

- ✓ Less fluent readers must focus their attention primarily on decoding individual words.
- ✓ More fluent readers focus their attention on making connections among the ideas in a text and between these ideas and their background knowledge.
- ✓ Research shows that English Learners (ELs) benefit from explicit systematic fluency instruction.
- ✓ Activities that develop fluent reading also help with oral language development as students are exposed to oral reading strategies that promote accuracy, automaticity and prosody.



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Fluency Strategies for English Learners (ELs)

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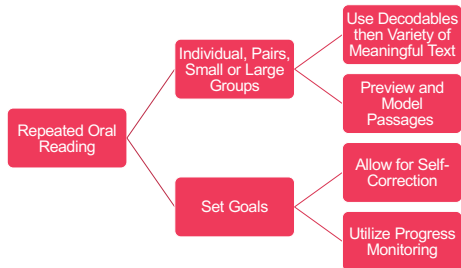
- ✓ Choral Reading: repeated reading with groups where they read at the same time
- ✓ Partner Reading: pair English Learners (ELs) with monolingual and other English Learners (ELs) with stronger English language skills creating active engagement with their classmates
- ✓ Echo Reading: utilize in small groups, whole groups, or individualized so that students are echoing fluent reading by an adult
- ✓ Monitor progress in phrasing, pacing, smoothness, and expression
- ✓ Multiple Oral Reading Scales are available for progress monitoring



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Fluency Strategies for English Learners (ELs)

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48

Think, Pair, Share

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Directions:

1. Identify one phonics and fluency strategy that you will commit to using with your English Learners (ELs).
2. Pair with someone near you.
3. Share the strategy that you identified.

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“

There is no comprehension strategy powerful enough to compensate for the fact you can't read the words.

Anita Archer

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Let's Keep Exercising

The Language Comprehension Rope for English Learners (ELs)

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Vocabulary and English Learners (ELs)

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Vocabulary words are the words students must know to communicate as well as understand a text.

Two ways that students learn words:

Intentional Instruction - exposure to words through direct explicit instruction

Incidental Learning - indirect exposure to words



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Principles of Instructional Design for Vocabulary Instruction

53

Build vocabulary knowledge by combining new information with what the learner already knows to produce higher cognitive learning.

Integrate multiple opportunities for using new vocabulary to make connections to concepts and lived experiences.

Integrate intentional opportunities for adult-child language interaction around new vocabulary during content learning.

Simmons & Kame'enui, 1998



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Vocabulary Strategies for English Learners (ELs)

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- Directly teach key words in-depth with reference to all linguistic features.
- Use a direct and explicit routine for introducing new words.
- Teach students independent word learning strategies.
- Utilize content-enriched vocabulary practices.
- Include word level, sentence level, and text level explicit instruction.
- Provide vocabulary instruction for students based on their Language Proficiency Stage.



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“

Chief among the factors influencing reading comprehension is **background knowledge**. Research clearly shows that how much readers understand about the text’s topic before they read it is a **major factor** in how much they understand while and after they read it.

Catts, H. W. (2021, December 8)

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Building Background Knowledge Strategies for English Learners (ELs)

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- Provide students **access to complex texts**.
- **Preview texts** to understand what background knowledge and vocabulary instruction is needed.
- Know your student’s own **background and culture** to understand how to guide your instruction.
- **Connect texts** by topic and **provide real examples, videos, and images** to build background knowledge.
- Allow students to spend extended time on a topic.
- Utilize **graphic organizers** to provide visual references.

Instruction should be specific, explicit, and sequenced.

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Language Structure

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Sentence-level comprehension of text, including how the arrangement of words within sentences impacts the meaning

Syntax	the underlying system within a language of how words are arranged to make sense.
Grammar	the set of rules within a language of how words can be used, or the word order that conveys the intended meaning
Semantics	the overall message of the sentence, including the tone and mood, as determined by the words used within the sentence.


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Language Structure Strategies for English Learners (ELs)

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Explicit Instruction in Sentence Building Will:	Sequence for Sentence Building:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improve grammar and conventions •Boost linguistic complexity and clarity •Enhance revision and editing skills •Improve reading comprehension and vocabulary •Allow more complex writing by making writing less taxing on the brain and working memory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Sentences and fragments •Scrambled sentences •Sentence types •Developing questions •Basic conjunctions (because, but, so) •Subordinating conjunctions •Appositives •Sentence combining •Sentence expansion

The Writing Revolution, 2018


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Literacy Knowledge

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Literacy Knowledge involves understanding how printed language conveys meaning.

Build vocabulary lessons based on what the students already know to produce a higher level of understanding

Use multiple opportunities for English Learners (ELs) to use new words and make connections with the concepts

Build explicit tasks for students to practice new words within the classroom

Make sure to integrate cognates where possible to help students better understand the words and how to use them in sentences and phrases




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Literacy Knowledge Subskills

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Print Concepts	Genres	Text Features and Structures
Print represents language	Using different genres strengthens vocabulary	Enhances understanding of text
We read from left to right	Helps build background knowledge	Text structures help identify problems/solutions, compare/contrast, sequencing
Letters make words		Supports comprehension
Words make sentences		Helps with writing
Sentences convey ideas		



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Literacy Knowledge Strategies for English Learners (ELs)

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Utilize explicit instruction to identify the different literary types used for each reading activity.

1. Preview the text.
2. Look at the overall organization and review the type of text and how they will need to adjust their reading process.
3. Define the purpose of reading.
4. Review the format of the text.
5. Draw attention to bold words or phrases and how the chapters are organized.
6. Review and discuss illustrations, pictures, charts, and tables and have students reflect on how those relate to the story or content.



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Verbal Reasoning

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Verbal reasoning is the ability for readers to decipher and reason with the meaning of text while they read. They can interpret similes, metaphors, and various figures of speech to infer the actual meaning.

English Learners (ELs) will have trouble with unusual vocabulary, figurative language, very complex sentence structures, or unfamiliar styles and genres.

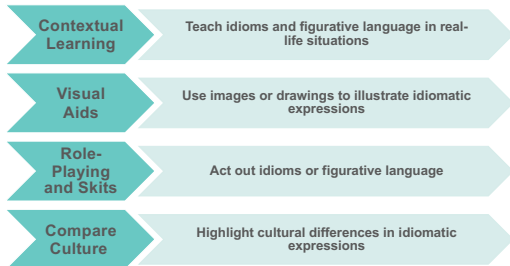
Integration of intensive language development with reading instruction is highly recommended.



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Verbal Reasoning Strategies for English Learners (ELs)

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Think, Pair, Share

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Directions:

1. Identify one building background, language structure, literacy knowledge, verbal reasoning, strategy that you will commit to using with your English Learners (ELs).
2. Pair with someone near you.
3. Share the strategy that you identified.



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Key Take-Aways

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- Foundational Skills are the building blocks of all other skills.
- Explicit Systematic Instruction is in all strands of the Reading Rope.
- Reading Comprehension and Language Acquisition are not separate skills.
- Collaboration between EL and ELA teachers is key for growth.
- Knowing and understanding your students' backgrounds and culture leads to effective classroom communities.
- Anchor Charts for instruction benefit all students.
- Support English Learners (ELs) with rich content and vocabulary, if you think they can't, they never will.



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Questions

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Resources and Publications

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- <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/the-elementary-secondary-education-act-the-every-student-succeeds-act-of-2016/every-student-succeeds-act-essay/>
- https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/EL/EL%20Guidance%2C%20Fundino%2C%20and%20Instructional%20Supports_combinedAug2018.pdf
- <https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/connect-students-background-knowledge-content-ell-classroom>
- <https://hegoerty.org/resources/blog-post/phonemic-awareness-with-english-language-learners/>
- <https://dyslexiaida.org/what-is-structured-literacy/>
- <https://www.wereareteachers.com/scarboroughs-rope/>
- <https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/about-reading/articles/what-does-research-tell-us-about-teaching-reading-english-language#comprehension>
- <https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/content-area-literacy/articles/10-key-policies-and-practices-teaching-english-language>



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Resources and Publications

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- <https://www.waterford.org/education/reading-fluency/>
- <https://www.aft.org/ae/fall2018/august>
- https://www.aft.org/ae/fall2018/walqui_heritage
- <https://www.colorincolorado.org/research/educating-english-language-learners-review-latest-research>
- <https://www.onebilingualteacher.com/blog/teaching-idioms-and-figurative-language-to-esl-students>
- <https://surveyschoolsone.ca/teachers/literacy/elementary/reading-essentials/>
- <https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/background-knowledge-and-ells-what-teachers-need-know>



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Resources and Publications

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- Cardenas-Hagan, Elsa. *Literacy Foundations for English Learners: A Comprehensive Guide to Evidence-Based Instruction*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing, 2020.
- Chall, Jean. *Stages of Reading Development*. McGraw Hill, 1983.
- Hochman, Judith C., and Natalie Wexler. *The Writing Revolution*. Jossey Bass, 2017.
- Krashen, Stephen, and Tracy Terrell. *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom*. Pergamon, 1983.
- Simmons, D. C., and Kame'enui, E.J., (Ed.), *What Reading Research Tells Us About Children With Diverse Learning Needs: Bases and Basics*. Mahwah, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum Associated.




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Stephanie Mollett
MDE Literacy Coach
smollett@mdek12.org

Renee' Buckley
MDE Literacy Coach
rbuckley@mdek12.org

mdek12.org



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