

**Considerations for Teachers of English Learners**

**Using the Grades K-3 Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy**

****

The **Grades K-3** **Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy** are written with a philosophy that is consistent and in line with the State English language proficiency standards (WIDA) their Guiding Principles, WIDA E-ELD Standards, and WIDA Can Do Philosophy.



The **Grades K-3 Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy** promote culturally and linguistically responsive teaching.

1. **Deliberate, research-informed efforts to foster literacy motivation and engagement within and across lessons[[1]](#endnote-1)**

* Provide English Learners opportunities to make culturally informed choices in their reading and writing
* Establish a purpose for students to engage with appropriate literacy artifacts
  + Identify both language and content objectives for English Learners
  + Use culturally diverse concepts to which English Learners can relate
* Incorporate opportunities for authentic interaction
  + Provide a word bank for academic content that English Learners can use in oral and written English language production

1. **Read aloud of age-appropriate books and other materials, print or digital[[2]](#endnote-2)**

* Attend to comprehensible input
  + Include movement, props, video, photos, examples, non-examples, etc.
  + Scaffold language experiences in English through role-playing classroom tasks
* Assess English Learners’ prior knowledge to avoid mismatch of schemata
* Utilize comprehension strategies to adapt the lesson without modifying its content
  + Simplification, elaboration, and use of graphic organizers, etc.

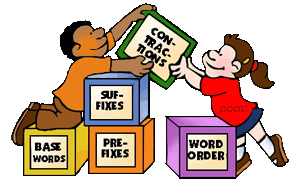


1. **Small group and individual instruction, using a variety of grouping strategies and instruction** **targeted to children’s observed and assessed needs in specific aspects of literacy development[[3]](#endnote-3)**

* Front load vocabulary for English Learners to increase their level of participation in partner and group work
* Use specific routines to pre-teach key content vocabulary such as science concepts and record/illustrate new words in vocabulary notebooks to support retention of new words
* Modify oral directions for English Learners at the lower levels of English language proficiency during group and individual work
  + Use shorter phrases/sentences
  + Emphasize key vocabulary
  + Give extended wait time
  + Provide visual aids/cues

1. **Activities that build phonological awareness[[4]](#endnote-4)**

* Look for and attend to similarities between the learned English sounds and the native language sounds
  + Make explicit connections for students
* Provide systematic and focused instruction to increase phonological awareness
  + Attend to comprehensible input
  + Emphasize and repeat exposure



1. **Explicit instruction in letter-sound relationships[[5]](#endnote-5)**

* Give ample opportunity for English Learners to practice new English sounds and letters
* Add regular feedback to allow the formation of new habits in the articulation of English sounds that do not exist in the students’ native language(s)
  + Speak slowly and clearly when pronouncing the voiced and voiceless sounds, use more pauses between sounds, and change pitch and tone to differentiate between neighboring sounds



1. **Research and standards-aligned writing instruction[[6]](#endnote-6)**

* Utilize WIDA Instructional Framework to support writing development of English Learners
  + Use WIDA 2012 Amplification of The English Language Development Standards Kindergarten-Grade 12 to ensure adequate alignment of the content with the standards
  + Use WIDA Can Do Descriptors to set learning goals and targets based on English Learners’ levels of English language proficiency
    - Allow students to use first/native language (when it’s a medium of instruction) to help form words in English
    - Provide information using graphic organizers
    - Provide and model sentence starters
    - Provide word/phrase banks
* Provide explicit instruction of the English subject-verb object pattern
  + Subject-verb pattern in many Eastern languages is verb-subject-object, and the pattern adjective-noun in some Western languages is noun-adjective

1. **Intentional and ambitious efforts to build vocabulary and content knowledge[[7]](#endnote-7)**

* Provide several, repeated, oral and written exposures to target vocabulary words
* Use techniques that increase retention of newly learned vocabulary words
  + Contextualize vocabulary, word walls, word clouds, concept maps, word sorts, Fryer model quadrants, vocabulary cards with visuals and illustrations

1. **Abundant reading material and reading opportunities in the classroom[[8]](#endnote-8)**

* Include reading materials that highlight and celebrate diversity
  + Give English Learners the opportunity to bring books from their home culture(s) and in their first language(s)
* Encourage development of home language
  + Provide first language support, when available
* Emphasize materials that connect to students’ prior knowledge and interests, and reflect students’ backgrounds and cultural experiences

1. **Ongoing observation and assessment of children’s language and literacy development that informs their education[[9]](#endnote-9)**
   * Use checklists or rubrics linked to the process of second language acquisition
     + Use the WIDA performance definitions and/or the WIDA Speaking and Writing rubric as sample tasks individual English Learners can do across the four domains of language

* Adapt assessments to attend to English Learners’ level(s) of English language proficiency
  + Reduce linguistic complexity without compromising academic content
    - Provide samples, read questions aloud, add pictures/visuals, provide sentence frames, and differentiate scoring for content over form

1. **Collaboration with families in promoting literacy[[10]](#endnote-10)**

* Communicate to parents in a language they will best understand, most likely, in the first language of the parent (when available and which may be different than that of the child)
  + Encourage speaking at home in a language that is most comfortable
  + Encourage reading at home in a language that is most comfortable
* Engage parents of English Learners by welcoming participation in class and school activities
* Include parents in the curriculum
* Celebrate the home culture and first language(s) of English Learners



1. (Endnotes)

   Developing Early Literacy Report of the National Early Literacy Panel*: A Scientific Synthesis of Early Literacy Development and Implications for Intervention*, National Institute for Literacy, 2008. Echevarria, J., Vogt, M. E. & Short, D. (2013). *Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: The SIOP® Model*, Fourth Edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Fairbain, S., & Jones-Vo, S. (2010). *Differentiating instruction and Assessment for English language learners: A guide for K-12 teachers*. Philadelphia: Caslon. Hill, J. & Flynn, K. (2006). *Classroom Instruction That Works with English Language Learners*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Krashen, S. & Terrel, T. (1983). *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the*

   *Classroom*. Alemany Press. Moser, J. Harris, J. & Carle, J. (2011). *Improving teacher talk through a task-based approach*. ELTjournal. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. August, D., Artzi, L., & Mazrum, J. (2010). *Improving science and vocabulary learning of English language learners: CREATE brief*. Washington D.C.: Center for Research on the Education of and Teaching of English language learners, Retrieved November 7th, 2016 from [www.cal.org/create/publications/briefs/improving-science-and-vocabulary-learning-of-English-learners.html](http://www.cal.org/create/publications/briefs/improving-science-and-vocabulary-learning-of-English-learners.html) Brooks, K., & Thurston, L. (2010). *English language learner academic engagement and instructional grouping configurations*. American Secondary Education, 39 (1), 45-60. Echevarria, J., Richards-Tutor, C., Canges, R., & Francis, D. (2011). *Using the SIOP Model to promote the acquisition of language and science concepts with English learners*. Bilingual Research Journal, 34(3), 334-351. Kareva, V. & Echevarria, J. (2013). *Using the SIOP Model for effective content teaching with second language and foreign language learners*. Journal of Education and Training Studies, 1(2), 239-248. Liruso, S. & Villanueva de Debat, E. (2002-2003). *Giving Oral Instructions to EFL Young Learners*. Encuentro Journal. *Selecting Vocabulary Words to Teach English Language Learners*. ColorinColorado, 2016. *WIDA Research Brief, Collaborative Learning for English Language Learners* (2014). Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, on behalf of WIDA. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Anthony, J., Solari, E., Williams, J., Schoger, K., Zhang, Z., Branum-Martin, L., & Francis, D. (2009). *Development of Bilingual Phonological Awareness in Spanish-Speaking English Language Learners: The Roles of Vocabulary, Letter Knowledge, and Prior Phonological Awareness*, Scientific Studies of Reading.

   August, D., Carlo, M., Dressler, C. and Snow, C. (2005), *The Critical Role of Vocabulary Development for English Language Learners.* Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 20: 50–57. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5826.2005.00120.x. Developing Early Literacy Report of the National Early Literacy Panel*: A Scientific Synthesis of Early Literacy Development and Implications for Intervention*, National Institute for Literacy, 2008. Echevarria, J.& Vogt, M.E. (2010), *Using the SIOP Model to improve literacy for English learners*. New England Reading Association Journal (NERAJ), 46 (1) 8-15. Shanahan, T. (2009) *English Language Learners: Developing Literacy in Second-Language Learners—Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*, Journal of Literacy Research. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Guccione, M. (2009) *Comprehension and English Language Learners: 25 Oral Reading Strategies That Cross Proficiency Levels*, Heinemann. Schneider, E., & Evers, T. (2009). *Linguistic intervention techniques for at-risk English language learners*.Foreign Language Annals*, 42*(1), 55-76. Vaughn, S., Mathes, P., Linan-Thompson, S., Cirino, P., Carlson, C., Pollard-Durodola, S., Cardenas-Hagan, E., Francis, D. (2006). *Effectiveness of an English Intervention for First-Grade English Language Learners at Risk for Reading Problems*, The Elementary School Journal. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Stathis, R., and Gotsch, P. (2013). *Grammar gallery: The research basis*. Ruidoso, NM: The Teacher Writing Center. *WIDA 2012 Amplification of The English Language Development Standards Kindergarten Grade 12* (2012). Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin, on behalf of WIDA. *WIDA English Language Learner Can Do Booklet, Grades PreKindergarten-Kindergarten* (2012). Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin, on behalf of WIDA. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Carlo, M. S., August, D., McLaughlin, B., Snow, C. E., Dressler, C., Lippman, D. N., Lively, T. J., & White, C. E. (2004). *Closing the gap: Addressing the vocabulary needs of English-language learners in bilingual and mainstream classrooms*. Reading Research Quarterly, 39(20), 188–215. Echevarria, J., Vogt, M. E. & Short, D. (2013). *Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: The SIOP® Model*, Fourth Edition. Manyak, P.C. (2010). *Vocabulary instruction for English learners: Lesson from MCVIP*. The Reading Teacher, 64 (2), 143-146. Lesaux, N.K., Crosson, A., Kieffer, M.J.., & Pierce, M. (2010). *Uneven profiles: Language minority learners’ word reading, vocabulary, and reading comprehension skills*. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 31, 475-483. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. August, D., & Shanahan, I.(2010). *Effective English literacy instruction for English learners. In California Department of Education(ED), Improving education for English learners: Research-based approaches*. Sacramento, CA:CDE Press. Cho, S., Xu, Y., & Rhodes, J. (2010). *Examining English Language Learners’ Motivation of, and Engagement in, Reading: A Qualitative Study*, The Reading Matrix. Nichols, William Dee, Rupley, William H., Webb-Johnson, Gwendolyn, & Tlusty, Gita. *Teachers Role in Providing Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction*. Reading Horizons, 2000. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Fairbain, S., & Jones-Vo, S. (2010*). Differentiating instruction and Assessment for English language learners: A guide for K-12 teachers*. Philadelphia: Caslon. Thomas, W.P., and V.P. Collier (1997). *School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students*. Washington, D.C.: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. *WIDA English Language Learner Can Do Booklet, Grades PreKindergarten-Kindergarten* (2012). Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin, on behalf of WIDA. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. *Collaborating for Success Parent Engagement Toolkit* (2011). Parent Engagement Committee, Michigan Department of Education. *English Learner Toolkit*, US Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, August 2015. [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/index.html. Retrieved 10/1/16](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/index.html.%20Retrieved%2010/1/16). Kremer- Sadlik, T., & Fatigante, M. (2015) *Investing in children’s future: Cross-cultural perspectives and ideologies on parental involvement in education*. Childhood 2015, Vol. 22(1) 67–84. O’Brien, L.M. , Paratore, J. (2014). *Examining Differential Effects of a Family Literacy Program on Language and Literacy Growth of English Language Learners With Varying Vocabularies.*

    Journal of Literacy Research, vol. 46 no. 3, 383-415. Peña, D. C. (2000*). Parent involvement: Influencing factors and implications.* The Journal of Educational Research, 94(1), 42–54. EJ615791. Snow, C. E., Barnes, W. S., Chandler, J., Goodman, I. F., & Hemphill, L. (1991). *Unfulfilled expectations: Home and school influences on literacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. ED356303. Starkey, P., & Klein, A. (2000). *Fostering parental support for children’s mathematical development: An intervention with Head Start families*. Early Education and Development, 11(5), 659–680. EJ618579. Shaver, A. V., & Walls, R. T. (1998). *Effect of Title I parent involvement on student reading and mathematics achievement*. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 31(2), 90–97. EJ561992. *The Cornerstone of the WIDA Standards: Guiding Principles of Language Development* (2010). Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, on behalf of WIDA. : US Department of Education (2012c) *Partnership for family involvement in education*, Retrieved November 9th, 2016 [www.ed.gov/pubs/PFIE/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/PFIE/index.html) . [↑](#endnote-ref-10)