

# Three Principles to Help English Learners Succeed

“You will notice that many of the recommended practices for children learning a second language parallel our recommendations for all students. Though all kids benefit from them, children learning a second language depend on these practices. Without them, school can be a confusing and frustrating place. With these practices, school makes sense for second language learners and they join their classmates in learning throughout the day.”

-Stephen Cary, *Second Language Learners*

## **Increase Interaction**

- Think-Pair-Share
- Chunk ‘n’ Chew
- Tea Party
- Inside-Outside Circle
- Paraphrase Passport
- Mix and Match
- Round Table
- Rotating Review
- Four Corners
- Jigsaw Expert Groups
- Folded Value Lines
- Numbers

## **Increase Comprehensibility**

- Teach the Text Backwards
- THIEVES
- ABC Summarize
- Graphic Organizers
- Quick Write
- Web of Understanding
- Think Aloud
- Information Gap
- Save the Last Word for Me
- Whip Zip
- From Text to Graphics and Back Again

## **Increase Thinking Skills**

- Numbered Heads
- Explicit Questioning
- List-Group-Label
- 3-2-1

# Increase Interaction

## Think-Pair-Share

- Question or problem is posed related to the area the students are covering.
- Students are instructed to individually think about the answer.
- Students are paired with another student to discuss their answer.
- After the discussion, students share their answers verbally with the class.

## Chunk 'n' Chew

- The teacher presents the lesson in 11-to-17 minute chunks.
- Students are given time (11-15 minutes) to process the information presented.
- Students are in pairs and they re-teach the information to each other.
- Students may also take time to draw or write (summary, reflection, etc.) in a journal.

## Tea Party

- Students read information on individual cards several times.
- Students pair up and take turns reading their cards to each other. They move apart, form new pairs and read and share information with each other.

## Inside-Outside Circle

- Students stand in two circles: one circle faces in and the other one faces out.
- Students form pairs by facing another student in the other circle.
- Students in one circle begin speaking while the other students listen.
- The speaking and listening roles are then reversed.
- The circles rotate so each student has a new partner and the speaking and listening resume.

## Paraphrase Passport

- Students form pairs.
- The teacher poses a question or problem.
- Students individually think about the answer or solution.
- The first partner begins speaking while the second partner listens without commenting.
- The first partner stops talking.
- The second partner paraphrases what the first partner said while the first partner listens silently.
- The partner confirms the accuracy of the paraphrasing.
- The roles reverse.

## Mix and Match

- Students mix, repeatedly quizzing new partners using information summarized on cards as prompts and trading these cards before new pairs are formed.
- Afterwards, students rush to find a partner with the card that matches theirs.

## Round Table

- In teams, students take turns generating written responses to the team project.
- Students pass their papers clockwise so each teammate can add to the prior responses.

### **Rotating Review**

- Teacher posts charts that are each labeled with different topics.
- Groups of students are assigned to each chart.
- Chart groups discuss the topic orally before writing.
- Scribe records a summary of the group's discussion on the chart.
- Groups rotate to the next chart, discuss it, and then a different scribe writes a summary on the chart.
- Rotating continues using different scribes until the groups return to the chart where they began.
- Groups review and discuss what other groups added to their chart.

### **Four Corners**

- The teacher chooses four concepts from their content area and labels each corner of the room with one of the concepts.
- The students choose one concept they wish to discuss and they move to that corner.
- The teacher plans an activity for the students at each corner such as a project or another cooperative learning task which the students complete and then share with the class.

### **Jigsaw Expert Groups**

- Students are grouped evenly into jigsaw groups.
- Group members number off.
- Students are grouped a second time evenly into "expert" groups according to their number.
- Expert groups study one topic.
- Students are regrouped in original jigsaw groups so each group has at least one member from each expert group.
- Experts report on their study. Other students learn from the experts.

### **Folded Value Lines**

- Students arrange themselves on a value line using a scale from lowest to highest; They may line up by age, birthdays, language experience, opinion on a topic, etc.
- Students fold the value line so opposite ends of the line meet.
- Pairs face each other and discuss a question or topic.
- The line is shifted to form new pairs and the discussion continues.

### **Numbers**

- The teacher poses questions that have numbers for answers.
- The students get into groups that are equal to the answer of the question. For example, "How many sides does a triangle have?" (Three) Students will get into groups of three.
- The students will discuss the assigned topic.
- If there is an odd number (not enough to make a full group), these students go to designated area for one turn and then **must** be in a group for the next question.

# Increase Comprehensibility

## Teach the Text Backwards

- Traditional sequence for using textbooks:
  1. Read the text.
  2. Answer the questions at the end of the chapter.
  3. Discuss the material in class.
  4. Do the applications or expansions.
- To teach the text backwards, the class completes an application or expansion first. This can be used to motivate students, activate prior knowledge, and establish a purpose for learning.
- The teacher conducts a discussion to introduce new language and concepts.
- The teacher examines the study questions and summary at the end of the chapter to preview the reading and identify key concepts.

## THIEVES (This is a great strategy for previewing textbook chapters.)

- Read the **T**itle
- Read the **H**eadings (usually bolded)
- Read the **I**ntroduction (usually first two paragraphs)
- Read **E**very first sentence of each paragraph
- Read the **V**isuals and **V**ocabulary (captions, illustrations, charts, graphs, maps)
- Read the **E**nd of chapter questions
- Read the **S**ummary (usually last two paragraphs)

## ABC Summarize

- Each student is given a letter of the alphabet and they must think of one word or idea beginning with that letter related to the topic.
- After reading the story, the students work in pairs or small groups to think of words that start with the letters they have that reflect important points of the story.
- The class creates a list of the most interesting words from A to Z generated by the pairs. The teacher makes a special point to hear each justification.

## Graphic Organizers

- Students make graphic representations of the organizational patterns of text.

Graphic organizers:

- Can be used to facilitate pre-reading and post-reading; pre-writing and revising; discussing and reasoning;
- Involve visual and verbal information; and
- Facilitate teachers and students learning from each other.

## Quick Write

- The students are given the topic to write on and a time limit (three minutes, for example).
- Students then free write on the topic for the time given.

**Web of Understanding** (Great strategy to equalize the balance of student contributions during a review of the text or unit of study)

- Students sit in a circle and roll or toss a ball of yarn back and forth across the group.
- As the ball comes to a student, that student contributes an idea or piece of information, a reaction, retelling, main idea, or important fact related to the text of study.
- Each student must have an opportunity to touch the ball and share an idea before anyone has a second turn.

### **Information Gap**

- Each student has a card with only partial information on it.
- Students move within the large group sharing their information in order to find the other student with the missing information.
- Information may involve descriptions of pictures, maps, or manipulatives.
- Learners are evaluated on their effectiveness in bridging the information gap.
- Information Gap assesses many language functions including: describing, giving information, and giving directions.

### **Save the Last Word for Me**

- Students read a designated text.
- Students complete three to four index cards with the following information:
  1. Side one: Students select an idea, phrase, quote, or fact from the text that evokes a response.
  2. Side two: Students write their reaction to what they wrote on side one.
- Students gather in small groups to discuss the information.
- A student reads side one of his/her card and others in the group respond to the information shared.
- The student who authored the card gets the last word by sharing side two of his/her card.
- The process is repeated until everyone in the group has shared both sides of their cards.

### **Whip Zip**

- The teacher poses a question to the students.
- Each student responds briefly.
- If a student has no response at the time of his/her turn, they may say “Pass.” This is a conditional pass because after the last person shares, these students will be asked to reply.

### **From Text to Graphics and Back Again**

The teacher:

- Previews a chapter and determines how it is organized and what its key concepts are;
- Completes a graphic organizer that will help students understand the organization of the text and/or important content and relationships in the chapter;
- Writes several simple sentences that express the content and relationships illustrated on the organizer; and
- Describes the students’ writing task which uses the content, language, and relationships on the organizer.

# Thinking Skills

## Numbered Heads

- Students number off within each group. The groups are also numbered.
- The teacher prompts, gives a directive, asks a question, etc.
- Students think individually about the topic.
- Groups discuss the topic so that any member of the group can report for the group.
- The teacher chooses number to determine which group will answer. The teacher then chooses another number to determine which member of the chosen group will answer.

## Explicit Questioning

- Remembering: Recalling information
- Understanding: Explaining or constructing ideas or concepts
- Applying: Using information in another situation
- Analyzing: Breaking information into smaller parts to explore relationships and overall structure
- Evaluating: Making judgments based on standards through checking and critiquing
- Creating: Generating new ideas, products, ways of viewing things, etc.

*Bloom's revised taxonomy* (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2008 from <http://www.kurwongbss.qld.edu.au/thinking/Bloom/blooms.htm>.

Anderson, L.W., Krathwohl, D.R., Airasian, P.W., Cruikshank, K.A., Mayer, R.E., Pintrich, P.R., Raths, J., & Wittrock, M.C. (Eds.) (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing — A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

**List-Group-Label** (This activity combines brainstorming and categorization as a way to help students organize concepts.)

- The teacher writes the topic on the chalkboard.
- The class brainstorms ideas including words or phrases they associate with the topic.
- The class is divided into small groups which organize the words that have been listed according to what they have in common.
- Once the categories of the words have been identified, the students decide on a label for each group of words.

## 3-2-1

Following an activity, the students write:

- Three things they learned;
- Two things they found interesting; and
- One question they still have.