

Suggestions for Teachers of ESL Students

Level 1: Students performing at this level of English language proficiency begin to demonstrate receptive or productive English skills. They are able to respond to some simple communication tasks.

Behaviors:

- The newcomer
- Silent period: Will not talk; very natural
- May use some isolated words and expressions
- Withdrawn; immersed in receptive stage—listening!
- Says “yes” or “I understand,” but their face tells you otherwise

Resources:

- Picture dictionaries
- Trade books with low vocabulary; high visuals
- Magazines to illustrate point
- *Any illustrations to support content and ideas*
- More proficient bilingual peer (a student)
- English language model (a student)

Instruction:

- Use visuals when explaining content, concepts/ideas
- Lower stress level by peer-pairing
- Use gestures that coordinate with content, concepts/ideas
- Implement small groups or pairs to facilitate understanding

Assessment:

- Set up grading contract that is visually oriented
- Create visual representations of content and concepts; this is an alternative to an assignment or exam
- Pass/Fail Option
- Use English Language Proficiency Standards (ESL Standards)



Level 2: Students performing at this level of English language proficiency respond with increasing ease to more varied communication tasks.

Behaviors:

- Semi-withdrawn; still immersed in receptive stage; listening!
- Uses key words to communicate social concepts
- Uses some key words and phrases to communicate academic content and ideas
- Labels and writes salient points

Resources:

- Picture dictionaries
- Trade books with low vocabulary; high visuals
- Magazines to illustrate point
- Graphic organizers
- More proficient bilingual peer (a student)
- English language model (a student)

Instruction:

- Use visuals when explaining content, concepts/ideas
- Use gestures that coordinate with content, concepts/ideas
- Furnish with simplified readings about content that are supported visually
- Implement small groups or pairs to facilitate understanding
- Permit extra time to complete work/assignments
- Provide opportunity to answer simple yes/no questions

Assessment:

- Set up grading contract that is visually oriented
- Pass/Fail Option
- Provide opportunities to label and categorize visually represented content for assignments and exams
- Create content area understanding with a visual dictionary for assignments and exams
- Answer simple yes/no questions and simply formatted questions for assignments and exams
- Consider use of English Language Proficiency Standards (ESL Standards)



Level 3: Students performing at this level of English language proficiency tailor the English language skills they have been taught to meet their immediate communication and learning needs. They are able to understand and be understood in many basic social situations (while exhibiting many errors of convention) and need support in academic language.



Behaviors:

- The invisible ESL Student....
- Carries on *social* conversation; but syntax and word choice are awkward
- Continues to struggle with academic vocabulary and concepts, unless meaning is supported with visuals
- Understands lesson components that are well illustrated and modeled
- Read parts of book with limited understanding
- Writes with awkward syntax and word choice

Resources:

- Picture dictionaries
- Trade books with simplified text and supporting visuals
- Magazines to illustrate point
- Graphic Organizers
- Closed captioning function for videos
- English language model (a student)

Instruction:

- Use visuals when explaining content, concepts/ideas
- Use gestures that coordinate with content, concepts/ideas
- Furnish with simplified readings related to content
- Implement small groups or pairs to facilitate understanding
- Provide additional time for some assignments
- Furnish opportunities to respond with simple, straight-forward sentences.

Assessment:

- Set up grading contract about content expectations
- Pass/Fail Option
- Provide opportunities to label and categorize visually represented content for assignments and exams
- Create content area understanding with a visual dictionary for assignments and exams
- Answer simple yes/no questions and simply formatted questions for assignments and exams
- Consider use of English Language Proficiency Standards (ESL Standards)

ESL English Proficiency Levels

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Level 4: Students performing at this level of English language proficiency combine the elements of the English language in complex, cognitively demanding situations and are able to use English as a means for learning in other academic areas, although some minor errors of conventions are still evident.

Behaviors:

- Carries on fluent conversations
- Understands most lesson components that are well Illustrated and modeled
- Reads parts of book with more understanding
- Writes with some awkward syntax and word choice

Resources:

- Picture dictionaries
- Trade books to support abstract content/ideas
- Graphic Organizers
- Closed captioning function for videos
- English language model (a student)

Instruction:

- Use visuals when explaining content, concepts/ideas
- Furnish with simplified or supplemental readings related to content
- Implement small groups or pairs to facilitate understanding
- Provide additional time for assignments as needed
- Furnish opportunities to respond with process writing

Assessment:

- Set up grading contract about content expectations
- Anticipate invented spelling and some awkward sentence structure
- Provide concrete feedback about writing that is not overwhelming to student
- Consider use of English Language Proficiency Standards (ESL Standards)



For more information on instructional and assessment strategies for ESL Students, consult your MSDLT ESL Handbook available from your ESL Staff.