

## **ESL Modifications**

Listed below are ESL modifications teachers should consider using to better meet the needs of their students with limited English proficiency.

- Use mixed-level groups or partners
- Use same-language partner for beginning students
- Emphasize oral language development
- Use picture cues, video support, real objects (make concepts concrete)
- Use writing frames
- Simplify oral or written language
- Provide oral tests
- Give short answer tests
- Give modified tests
- Provide highlighted texts
- Use visual aids
- Provide additional instructions
- Provide advanced organizers-webbing, outlining, graphing
- Extend time for assignment completion
- Shorten assignments
- Use assignment notebooks and prompts
- Teach in small group
- Provide repeated reviews and drills-vary teaching strategies
- Allow for peer teaching
- Reduce paper/pencil tasks
- Provide manipulatives
- Seat at front of the classroom
- Help student build a card file of vocabulary words
- Read to the students
- Encourage student to underline key words or facts
- Use language experience activities
- Allow students an opportunity to express key concepts in their own words
- Provide a time and place for projects to be completed at school rather than at home
- Provide before and after school time to complete homework with teacher assistance

Teachers should also consider using the following strategies:

- Modify “teacher talk”
  - ✓ Slower rate
  - ✓ Clearer articulation
  - ✓ More use of high frequency vocabulary, less slang, fewer idioms
  - ✓ Shorter sentences
  - ✓ Simpler syntactic structures
  - ✓ Redundancy
  
- Use direct questioning techniques on previously presented materials
  - ✓ Check comprehension and retention of information through direct questions that elicit previously presented information; also ask as appropriate, “Do you understand?”
  - ✓ Reformulate misunderstood messages
  - ✓ Use gestures, visual, real objects, dramatics
  - ✓ Teach the students how to ask such questions or make such demands
  - ✓ Make it clear to students that it is perfectly legitimate and desirable to seek such help in ways that you present to them
  
- Explain new or unfamiliar concepts that are part of an instructional unit and that might cause confusion for the learners if they are not clarified before instruction begins
  - ✓ Analyze instructional content and language of each lesson in terms of the learners’ conceptual and linguistic needs
  - ✓ Provide definitions (explanation) of new or unfamiliar words
  - ✓ Teach or clarify new or unfamiliar language concepts, forms prior to presentation of the unit or during instruction
  
- Provide contextual support
  - ✓ Use non-verbal frame of reference, such as physical objects, realia, or experiences familiar to the students
  - ✓ Present information that is essential for learning but which may be unfamiliar to the students prior to or during the course of instruction
  
- Develop sensitivity to non-verbal feedback
  - ✓ Watch for non-verbal feedback that indicates understanding or lack of understanding and confusion
  - ✓ Find out what culturally-determined non-verbal gestures your students automatically use to indicate lack of comprehension; let them know that you understand those gestures and accept and appreciate them

Learn to detect and interpret feedback from the learners that may be culturally different from what you are used to; silence may denote confusion in one culture but comprehension in another.