Top 6 strategies for ell students

1. ELL lessons require planning for content and language



1. Connect to background knowledge
2. Comprehensible input content should be in language slightly above or on level



1. Lessons should include auditory visual & kinesthetic

 

1. Cooperative learning strategies



1. Modify vocabulary instruction

**Six Strategies for Teaching ELLs Across the Content Areas**

**1. Determine content and language objectives for each lesson.** Teachers need to learn how to write a content objective for every lesson in language that ELLs can understand. At the end of the lesson, students should be asked if the objective was met. Classroom teachers also need to set language objectives for the ELLs for each lesson. A language objective specifically outlines the language that ELLs will need in order to meet the content objective. For example, if your content objective is for ELLs to provide examples of solids, liquids, and gas, the language objective could be to write simple sentences about the stages of matter.

**2. Connect content to ELLs’ background knowledge.** Teachers need to consider the schema that ELLs bring to the classroom and to link instruction to the students’ personal, cultural, and world experiences. They also need to identify what their students do not know. They must understand how the cultures of their ELLs impact learning in the classroom.

**3. Provide comprehensible input for ELLs.** Language is not “soaked up.” The learner must understand the message that is conveyed.[Comprehensible input](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTnHonxao70)is a hypothesis first proposed by Krashen (1981). He purports that ELLs acquire language by hearing and understanding messages that are slightly above their current English language level. When ELLs are assigned to a general education classroom and spend most of their day in this environment, it is especially critical for them to receive comprehensible input from their content area teachers and classmates.

**4. Make lessons auditory, visual, and kinesthetic.** Use visual representations to introduce new concepts and vocabulary. Find graphs, maps, photographs, drawings, and charts. Create story maps and graphic organizers to teach ELLs how to organize information. ELLs will benefit from hands-on activities. Have them learn by doing. Investigate [project-based learning](http://www.edutopia.org/project-based-learning) and [Makerspaces](http://oedb.org/ilibrarian/a-librarians-guide-to-makerspaces/).

**5. Use cooperative learning strategies.** Lecture-style teaching excludes ELLs from the learning in a classroom. We don’t want to relegate them to the fringes of the classroom, doing a separate lesson with a classroom aide or ESL teacher. Working in small groups is especially beneficial to ELLs who have an authentic reason to use academic vocabulary and real reasons to discuss key concepts. ELLs benefit from cooperative learning structures. Give students a job in a group, and monitor that they are participating.

**6. Modify vocabulary instruction for ELLs**. ELLs do not usually learn new vocabulary indirectly. It needs to be explicitly taught in order for them to understand texts that they are reading. ELLs need many more exposures to new words than native-English speakers. They need to learn cognates, prefixes, suffixes, and root words to enhance their ability to make sense of new vocabulary . Understanding context clues such as embedded definitions, pictures, and charts builds ELLs’ schema. They should actively engage in holistic activities to practice new vocabulary because learning words out of context is difficult for them.  
Don’t overwhelm students with too many new words. Pick vocabulary that is absolutely essential in each unit. Introduce the vocabulary in a familiar and meaningful context and then again in a content-specific setting. For example, in a unit on tornadoes, the word “front” needs to be reviewed in a familiar context and then taught in the context of the unit.

<http://blog.tesol.org/six-strategies-for-teaching-ells-across-the-content-areas/>