

# English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) What Does Effective Instruction for ELLs Look Like?

## Program Goals

The goal of the ESOL program is to address the needs of the whole child, to provide language acquisition as quickly as possible, and to foster a teacher/parent/student cooperative approach to learning and teaching. This program fosters an environment where individual differences and learning preferences are given their rightful place.

## What Does Effective Instruction for ELLs Look Like?

There is a growing body of research that details effective ways to support ELLs in the classroom. These bulleted items are meant to summarize some of what the research tells us; please read the highlights below from the growing body of research that has been conducted on ELL populations for additional guidance.

- **Don't assume he/she does not speak or understand English... take the time to find out.**

- **Increase your knowledge.**

*Learn as much as you can about the language and culture of your students. Encourage them to share information about their culture.*

- **Encourage students to read in their 1st language and to speak in their 1st language at home.**

- **Read aloud!**

- **Focus on vocabulary.**

*Pre-teach vocabulary and concepts; use realia, demonstrations, visuals and multiple modalities when teaching. Illustrate, label and explain multiple meaning words.*

- **Simply your language, not the content.**

- **Prepare and provide focus questions before you start to teach the lesson.**

- **Announce the lesson's objectives and activities prior to the lesson.**

- **Demonstrate; use manipulatives.**

*Whenever possible, accompany your message with gestures, pictures, and objects that help get the meaning across. Model for students often.*

- **Make use of visual clues and graphic organizers.**  
*Use visual clues and graphic organizers to help convey meaning and check for understanding.*

- **Access prior knowledge.**

*Assess students' prior knowledge and tap into their past experiences to make learning interesting and meaningful.*

- **Teach note-taking.**

- **Provide frequent opportunities for ELLs to speak.**  
*Use small groups, partners, cooperative groupings, etc. to allow students to speak and learn from others.*

- **Develop a student-centered approach to teaching and learning.**

- **Ask inferential and higher order thinking questions.**

- **Recognize that students will make language mistakes.**

- **Do not force reticent students to speak.**

- **Bring the student's home language and culture into the classroom.**

- **Create listening stations so they may listen and read at the same time.**

- **Fluent conversation skills do not necessarily indicate academic proficiency.**