

Best Practices for teaching the ELL student:

Students whose first language is not English may require alternative instructional approaches and assessment procedures to benefit from content area instruction. The following teaching strategies and instructional practices may be used with ELL students at developmentally appropriate levels and considering the students' language proficiencies and cognitive levels. As with all students, the material should be relevant (Haynes & O'Loughlin, 2002).

Scaffolding: The teacher provides meaningful support and guidance needed for the ELL's learning growth toward each learning objective. Also, the teacher uses questioning techniques to elicit experiences that relate to his native culture. The teacher rephrases with words the student understands and uses pictures to adapt the questioning techniques.

Shelter: The teacher introduces new content by using visual aids, music, etc. The ELL student will be observed to note which topics come easily and which ones will require more support.

Total Physical Response (TPR): As much as possible, the teacher links language learning to enable the ELL student to make a physical response. This technique ties in to various learning styles and is fun for the student.

Reciprocal Teaching: To help the ELL student complete a task, the teacher presents an interactive lesson, assesses the student's response for comprehension, and then restructures the lesson to correct the student's response. This strategy is beneficial since it demonstrates how to learn. The ELL student's self-esteem is enhanced by control over the learning situation.

Critical Thinking Questions: The teacher encourages the ELL student to ask and answer questions that start with the words "why" and "how."

Hands-on Experiences: The ELL student is given opportunities to complete activities that he can demonstrate and describe orally.

Teaching Techniques: The teacher needs to simplify instructions, connect the instruction to the ELL's native culture, and use graphic organizers to allow access of information. Some examples are controlled language, labeling, vocabulary word banks, flash cards, and discussions.