

Instructional Best Practices for English Language Learners  
Walqui's 10 Priorities for Designing Instruction for Immigrant Students

**1. The culture of the classroom fosters the development of a community of learners, and all students are part of that community.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow down, take the time (most of us care) → just trying to get too much done, making us not look like we are caring.</li> <li>• Create a safe environment</li> <li>• Involve parents/invite families into the classroom</li> <li>• Learn as much as you can about students</li> <li>• Early on establish a “SAFE” environment for class and an opportunity for students to get to know each other</li> <li>• More activities needed to show caring by teacher</li> <li>• Get to know your students and gain their trust/respect. Show you care about each one individually. Make it safe for them to share.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give teachers time to work on this (out of class time)</li> <li>• our inservices allow us to work on collaboration in order to help us become life long learners. Although, there is never enough time</li> <li>• offer parent programs at times convenient for parents – not always after school hours</li> <li>• slow down what must be covered by a certain date so that standardized tests don't dictate when/how we do something.</li> <li>• Classroom climate needs to be established with parameters.</li> <li>• Reduce student load so teachers can better serve students</li> <li>• ↑staff ↓ class size</li> </ul>

**2. Good language teaching involves conceptual and academic development.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• instruction must be meaningful to the students</li> <li>• support systems for ELLs making transitions</li> <li>• ELL and regular Ed staff must collaborate to provide success academically and emotionally for ELLers</li> <li>• Yes, more collaboration to make transition easier</li> <li>• Need easier transition</li> <li>• It takes time and money</li> <li>• Higher expectations! Yes! (for all)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ↑ # ELL Staff</li> <li>• More real-world lessons for ESL and all students, not the “same old stuff”</li> <li>• Provide appropriate # of support staff based on population (in and out of ELL program)</li> <li>• Better planning and cooperation among teachers in orchestrating their lessons</li> <li>• Need to recognize students' feelings</li> <li>• Vertical articulation of curric, including ELL and SC courses</li> </ul>

**3. Students’ experiential background is used as a point of departure and an anchor in the exploration of new ideas.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More awareness re:ELLs school-wide!</li> <li>• Teachers need to respect all students and their backgrounds</li> <li>• Tolerance for all students and their backgrounds</li> <li>• Teachers need to recognize the value of other students’ support as a positive tool</li> <li>• Take the time to listen</li> <li>• Educators need to make meaningful connections with students</li> <li>• Mentoring programs, co-teaching, teaming</li> <li>• Administrators support teachers in culturally responsive practices with accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More PD for all classroom teachers to address classroom number ELLs</li> <li>• Boards of education need to put on their glasses!</li> <li>• Districts need to provide adequate “tng” (training?) as their population is changing</li> <li>• Just because the child lacks lang. L2 doesn’t mean it reflects their intelligence</li> <li>• We need a sound base to build from</li> <li>• Work on culturally responsive curric. + teaching + school climate.</li> </ul>

**4. Teaching and learning focus on substantive ideas that are organized cyclically.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H/M has special ELL texts that follow the main classroom texts, but in simpler language w/ specific ESL teacher materials → need \$ for teachers to purchase</li> <li>• I find often time ESL books (in a series) are not as inviting and boring for the students.</li> <li>• Thematic/interdisciplinary units – common vocabulary, strategies, etc..</li> <li>• Create time for ELL and red ED staff to discuss strategies linking background knowledge and past knowledge</li> <li>• High expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise dist. Curric. To support teaching (assessing) thematically</li> </ul>

**5. New ideas and tasks are contextualized.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers should use many different types of media to bring to life themes, words, and concepts that sometimes are difficult to explain in depth</li> <li>• Hands on activities</li> <li>• Share materials and ideas</li> <li>• Use everything that you have at your disposal to give students the necessary information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School/district needs to provide money</li> <li>• Money for field trips!!!</li> <li>• Money to provide experiences</li> </ul>

**6. Academic strategies, socio-cultural expectations, and academic norms are taught explicitly.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss customs in class of other countries (modeling)</li> <li>• Don't present like it's obvious</li> <li>• Peer mentoring to teach U.S. customs</li> <li>• Awareness of all cultures</li> <li>• Share what is done during various situations in diff. cultures.</li> <li>• We are so concerned with CMT's/CAPP's that we have take the fun out of learning about the Ameri. Culture and our ESL students cultures. Boo Hoo!</li> <li>• Compare and contrast traditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maybe help students learn the customs of USA</li> <li>• Offer electives or extracurricular activities to address concerns</li> <li>• A positive attitude is a great beginning for success</li> <li>• We do an International Night each year, where our ESL students get to shine.</li> </ul>

**7. Tasks are relevant, meaningful, engaging, and varied.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can use manipulatives and centers/ stations to complete a task</li> <li>• Activities need to be purposeful and engage students in meaningful ways</li> <li>• Lecturing is the most difficult in a learning situation</li> <li>• Change it up!! I get bored too when I don't change it up!!</li> <li>• They are modified according to student needs</li> <li>• Invite students' ideas in the design of classroom activities</li> <li>• Field trips, guest speakers, collaboration with community</li> <li>• More exciting lessons! Worksheets are boring! More hands on lessons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting all teachers to embrace new ideas/concepts/programs (many set in their ways)</li> <li>• Time? (collab/out of school)</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Cultivate and support professional risk taking (taken?) among teachers and admins</li> <li>• Hands on- great teaching strategy</li> <li>• Safely net curriculum with "assured" experiences for ALL students regardless of where they live!!!</li> </ul>

**8. Complex and flexible forms of collaboration maximize learners' opportunities to interact while making sense of language and content.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students work in small groups for cooperative learning</li> <li>• Importance of student discussion (and language)</li> <li>• Student directed instruction</li> <li>• Creates a classroom environment that is built on/around community → supportive!</li> <li>• Flexibility and coordination are the two elements that are the most absent in the classrooms that I provide ESL support</li> <li>• Differentiated instruction! Everyone learns differently – provide all opportunities.</li> <li>• Flexible grouping provides for more opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing for sheltered learning classrooms</li> <li>• Allow all types of instructional techniques</li> </ul>

**9. Students are given multiple opportunities to extend their understandings and apply their knowledge.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very important for all students to demonstrate mastery of concepts</li> <li>• Teacher can start a lesson on a topic and students can orally/written ass to it. Whole class participates</li> <li>• Education through inquiry</li> <li>• Variety is the spice of life!</li> <li>• Debate, group collab. Research groups, etc – inquiry ☺</li> <li>• Conclusion to lesson – what do you know? What do you want to know more about?</li> <li>• Small group/ whole group/cooperative group</li> <li>• Try anything to get your concepts across hands – on/visuals/music/art whatever!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

**10. Authentic assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning.**

Classroom	Building/District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Yes, it shows comprehension of topic or holes</li><li>• Yes, it demonstrates what the student knows</li><li>• Comprehension in L1 was a valuable tool giving confidence to the student to perform in L2</li><li>• Important to celebrate diversity so these barriers are broken down</li><li>• Builds confidence</li><li>• Practice makes perfect</li><li>• Demonstrates the inconsistencies from grade to grade – and throughout the district</li><li>• Embed CMT/CAPT strands/skills into authentic tasks. No more “CMT/CAPT practice” !!</li><li>• Could technology help?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It reveals strengths and weaknesses</li><li>• It shows that the “curriculum” as designed has been implemented</li><li>• Staff is aware of needed support from L1</li><li>• Progress is measured on individual basis – good</li><li>• DATA! DATA! DATA – too much!!!!</li></ul>