

Considerations for teachers of EAL/D students: learning from home

When designing teaching and learning programs for EAL/D learners, it is important to consider their specific language learning needs. The reflective questions below can support you to identify opportunities for differentiation when supporting students learning from home and in the classroom.

Reflective guiding questions
Does the learning consider the student's level of English language proficiency? (The ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression has characteristics that can assist with planning lessons to address the needs of different stages of learning English).
What are the academic language demands of the lesson being provided?
What are the cultural demands of the lesson being provided?
Is there assumed cultural or background knowledge?
Does the lesson allow for students' background knowledge to be activated? How does the lesson connect to previous learning experiences?
Is this new learning or a continuation of prior learning? If new, has the language and content been scaffolded and have opportunities for controlled and guided learning been included?
What opportunities have EAL/D learners been given to practise and revise new vocabulary in meaningful contexts?
Has key vocabulary been explicitly taught? Is key vocabulary regularly revisited?
Are the task instructions explicit and transparent? Have pictures/diagrams been labelled clearly to help assist with linking to task instructions?
What built-in scaffolding has been provided e.g. home language supports, visuals, audio and content presented in multiple ways?
How will language learning feedback be provided to students in a meaningful and timely manner?
Have visual aids been used to help students understand the task and key vocabulary?
Can immersive reader be used to help students understand the activities?

Teaching strategies
Providing a glossary of unusual words - Students can use L1 to write a definition.
Allowing students to use bilingual dictionaries/picture dictionaries. These are available for free from the Henry Parkes Equity Resource Centre .

Teaching strategies

Explicitly teaching academic words -highlighting the new words with a meaning attached. Providing a definition in a simple manner (student friendly language).
Revising new words and concepts from previous lesson- recapping how they relate to the next lesson.
Word clines help students to make connections between words and concepts and strengthen students' vocabulary e.g. placing words which describe size on a cline from smallest to largest.
Cloze passages selected carefully to ensure that text is not beyond the student's ability. The purpose of a cloze is to develop students reading skills so careful selection of content words (nouns) or a structure word (preposition or article) is necessary.
Utilising graphic organisers / concept maps.
The use of sentence stems when used in a writing framework or designed scaffold can help develop student writing. For example sentence stems introducing the beginning of a sentence can model and provide assistance with writing. The use of jumbled/sequencing sentences can also assist students to develop understanding of structure of texts/passages when writing for a purpose.
Sequenced pictures with hierarchies, flow charts, cycles or a structured overview.
Use of Visuals to help understand activities and task instructions.
Teaching and using reading strategies: previewing, predicting, scanning, reading for the main idea and reading for detail.
Utilising message abundancy by providing key vocabulary, and concepts, in multiple ways.
A Three-level guide will help EAL/D learners to gain a deeper understanding of a text, to make judgements about or challenge concepts or ideas.
Built-in scaffolding including controlled, guided and independent activities linked to the task and the language.
Providing opportunities for students to draw on home language skills.
Explicitly teaching text structures and grammatical features and how language choices may differ based on audience and purpose.
Note-taking activities where a visual model of the main idea within the text is shown. Providing a pro-forma outlining the main ideas and supporting detail that show the relationship of the main idea and supporting details.
Using a dictogloss to identify the main idea of a text. A Dictogloss also helps develop students listening skills. A short Dictogloss can focus on content words e.g. nouns and adverbs.
An alternative to reading difficult websites is to use immersive reader from the website using MS Edge browser to navigate. In top right-hand corner select 3 dots, and then select Read Aloud option (ctrl+shift+U), or copy text required to word document so students can highlight and right-click to open immersive reader to translate passage from website to have an understanding in L1 first and then attempt tasks.

For more information

Contact the EAL/D Education team at [Multicultural Education](#) or EAL/D.education@det.nsw.edu.au