

# AT YOUR Fingertips

## Lessons and Activities

Strategies for English Learners in Your Classroom  
K-12

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### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**WORD PYRAMID**

Help students make connections among words using word lists. Have students list facts, words, ideas, or examples that relate to a broad concept or idea. Provide students with sufficient time to brainstorm and record their responses. Place students into groups of four or five. Have the first student of each group name the category and describe or make gestures for each of the words on their list. Have the remaining group members try to guess the words. Continue to rotate until all students have had turns to share their lists.

**SECRET WORD**

Place students into pairs. Provide each student with a different list of 10 to 15 words. Have students switch back and forth giving one-word clues for the words on their lists. If partners have trouble guessing the words, they can give each other additional one-word clues. The game is continued until both students have had a chance to take their partners through all of the words on their lists. Repeat this game ensuring the same words to ensure students are being exposed to the terms frequently and to improve retention of the word meanings.

**CONNECT 3**

Display sets of selected words or facts grouped together in threes. Have student pairs write different sets of words on the tops of their templates. Then, give them time to write a word that describes how each set of three words are related on the bottom of each template. Tell students to fold their templates. Have students work in pairs quizzing each other on their different sets of words. Have them show their partners the three words and let their partners try to guess how the words are related to one another. Encourage partners to discuss different correct answers.

**READ AROUND THE WORD**

Discuss the meaning of a selected academic vocabulary word. Provide examples of how the word can be used in different sentences. Talk about what the word means in each sentence and ask students for synonyms of the selected word. Ask students to then use the synonyms in sentences. Once the synonyms are in sentences, have thoughtful discussions about the use of those words. For each of the original words, have students talk about whether substitutes for the synonym. Why or why not? The important thing about this strategy is the conversations that happen when you discuss the correct use of the words in context.

### Functions and Forms

The function of language is the purpose for using language. Teaching English from the perspective of language functions helps to identify the language demands of a specific academic task, form, or what are often called sentence frames, are the syntactic structures used in the English language to articulate thinking processes.

Language Function	Sentence Frames	Key Words
Agreeing and Disagreeing	I agree with... but... I believe... and right when they said... I disagree with... when they said... I think... was wrong when they said...	agree believe disagree however
Sequencing	First... then... lastly... At the beginning... next... finally... In the beginning... in the middle... at the end... First... second... third... last...	beginning and finally first last later
Comparing	... is... but... is not... ... that... does not... ... can... but... cannot... Through... can... connect...	is is not is/ is not similar to whereas
Explaining	... is... because... The reason for... is... This year... for example... I would like to clarify that...	because clearly for example
Inferring	I believe the author is trying to say... Even though I don't say so in the text, I think... The more I think about this passage, I realize... After reading this page, I think that...	assume believe conclude infer

### Strategies for English Learners in Your Classroom

Integrated Language Development

Integrated English language development (I-ELD) is understanding the language demands of content instruction and providing intentional language support to help students access, interpret, and produce language. Keep these key aspects of I-ELD in mind:

- Content-area standards are the goal; ELD standards are used to guide language support.
- Language is scaffolded and supported in content instruction throughout the day.
- I-ELD includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing equally.
- English is the medium of instruction, but primary languages can be used to scaffold content.
- I-ELD involves strategies for comprehensible input, strategies to maximize comprehensible output, and explicit academic language support.

**The Four Language Domains**

Language development is a complex process that requires students to develop language in four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For students to become proficient in a language, these skills cannot be discretely learned; the skills must be integrated in a complex web of receptive (listening and reading) and expressive (speaking and writing) language.

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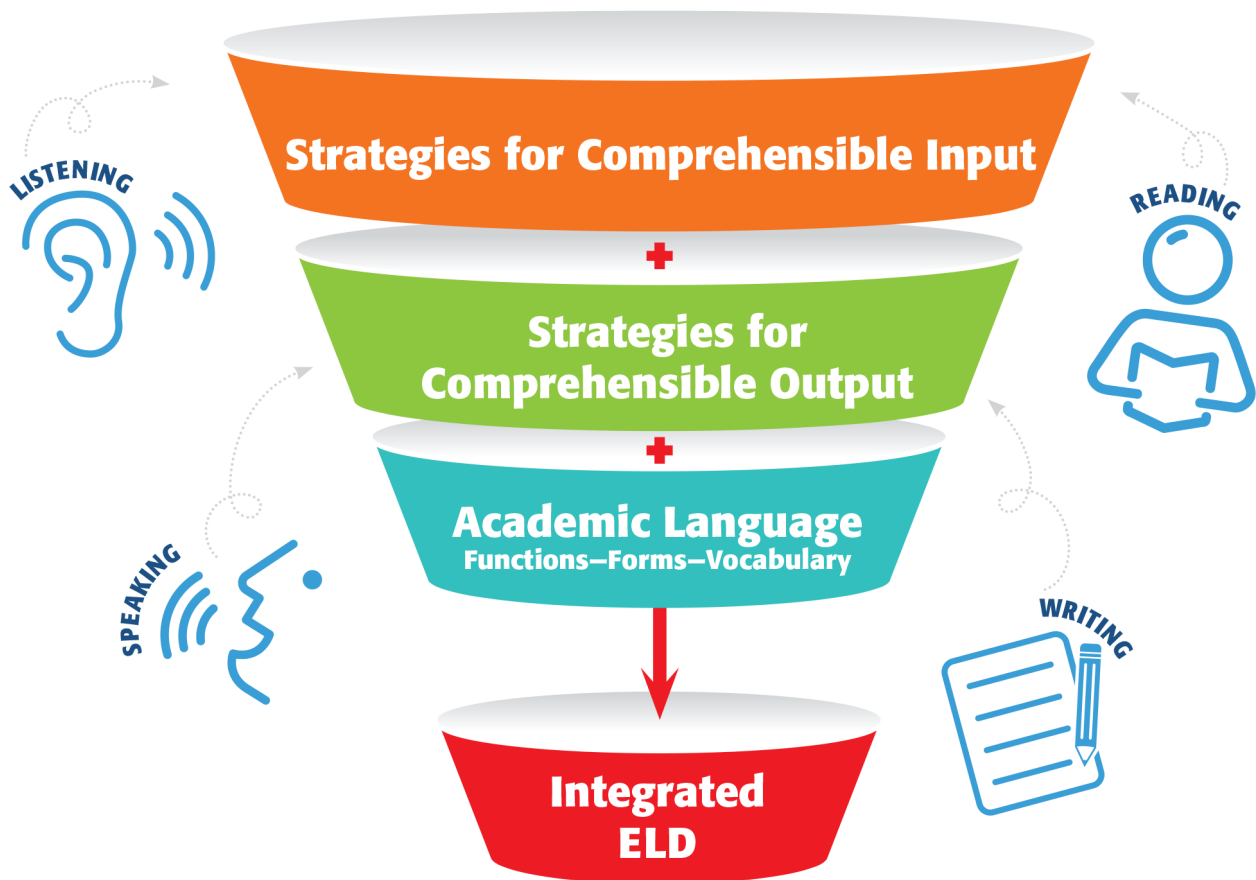
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### The Four Language Domains

Language development is a complex process that requires students to develop language in four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For students to become proficient in a language, these skills cannot be discreetly learned; the skills must be integrated in a complex web of receptive (listening and reading) and expressive (speaking and writing) language.



## READING

### Main Idea Tree

Display a basic tree outline with roots, trunk, and branches. After reading a text, pause to ask students to recall the key details. Record their ideas on the tree's branches. Their ideas symbolize being above the surface since they are basic recall details. Ask students to look at the details closely and find any patterns, words, or ideas that repeat. Write their ideas about this on the trunk as the topic of the text. Ask students what point, argument, or idea the author is trying to make. Add this to the trunk as the main idea. Have students find evidence to support the main idea, and record those details in the roots.

### Chunk and Chew

Begin reading a text out loud. Choose a good stopping point, such as where the plot is developing or new information has been shared. Have students discuss their comprehension of the text. Continue reading, and repeat these steps after the next chunk of text. Provide prompts as needed to help students discuss the text you are reading:

- What is happening in the text?
- What have you understood about...?
- What have you learned?
- What are you thinking?



## WRITING

### Say-Mean-Matter

Prepare students for literary response-and-analysis written tasks by guiding them to look at a text on three levels:

- What does it say? (recall)
- What does it mean? (analysis)
- Why does it matter? (evaluation)

Once students have processed the text, they can use these questions as a tool to craft response-to-literature pieces by working in reverse. Have them start by sharing their interpretations about why the text matters, and then have them support their main ideas with what it says and means.

### Written Discourse Frames

Develop a written task for students, and identify the components you expect them to include. For each component, create language forms or sentence starters to help support students with their academic language development. Present the discourse frames to students during the time in the lesson when they will be completing their written assignments.

# ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

## WORD PYRAMID

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## SECRET WORD

Place students into pairs. Provide each student with a different list of up to ten words. Have students switch back and forth giving one-word clues for the words on their lists. If partners have trouble guessing the words, they can give each other additional one-word clues. The game is continued until both students have had a chance to take their partners

through all the words on their lists. Repeat this game reusing the same words to ensure students are being exposed to the terms frequently and to improve retention of the word meanings.

## CONNECT 3

Display sets of selected words or facts grouped together in threes. Have student pairs write different sets of words on the tops of their templates. Then, give them time to write a word that describes how each set of three words are related on the bottom of each template. Tell students to fold their templates. Have students work in pairs quizzing each other on their different sets of words. Have them show their partners the three words and let their partners try to guess how the words are related to one another. Encourage partners to discuss different correct answers.

My 3 Words or Concepts
_____
_____
_____
Fold here
My Answer
_____

## READ AROUND THE WORD

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