Instructional and Assessment Strategies of English Language Learners

Open/Close Sort - Student pairs are given words/phrases on individual strips of paper and asked to sort the words/phrases into appropriate categories. Categories can be provided by the teacher or generated by the student pairs. Students must explain the reasoning behind their sort.

Numbered Heads Together - Groups of four or more students are assigned a task and each student is given a number for this cooperative learning strategy. The teacher poses a question and calls a specific number to respond and student assigned to that number becomes the spokesperson for the group. All members are responsible for the material because the group does not know who will be asked to respond.

CLOZE - Students are given a paragraph with words omitted and required to fill in the gaps in order to make the passage make sense. The omitted words can be key vocabulary or removed at random.

Word Bank - A list of answers is given along with the questions. This is a helpful tool for students during assessment and daily work allowing students to work more independently, not worry about spelling, and use process of elimination.

Manipulatives/Hands-on Materials - Materials that students can hold, move, feel, put together, and take apart. This gives students a better understanding of the concepts being taught.

Games/Kinesthetic Activities - Giving students a chance to move around in the classroom can lead to a better understanding of the material presented. Limited and non-English speakers can follow the lead of the teacher and their peers and by participating, feel more like a part of the class.

Realia - Objects from real life that are used in a classroom environment can aid understanding. Objects include coins, art, tools, textiles, etc.

Sentence Prompts/Paragraph Frame - Write out one prompt for students to write about for a journal entry. If you are writing a paper in class it can be outlined with the first and last sentences and beginnings or ideas for other sentences already added. This allows students to know what is expected and work more independently.

Round Robin/Roundtable - This strategy can be used in a variety of ways. Roundtable brainstorming, reading, and writing are all easy ways to involve all students in a small group. Participation is required of all students, but help may be given by any student in the group or by the teacher.

Bruner's Concept Attainment - This strategy is a structured inquiry/indirect instructional method that involves students searching for and identifying attributes that can be used to distinguish examples of a given group or category from non-examples. Using this method, students learn to classify a set of objects or events into categories. Instead of just telling students

the answers, this method is used by teachers to allow students to figure out answers themselves, become more independent and analytical thinkers, and make connections between what they know and what they will be learning.

Think-Pair-Share - A learning strategy that is designed to enable students to formulate individual ideas, share these ideas with another student, and encourage classroom participation. In think-pair-share, the teacher poses a challenging or open-ended question and gives students a half to one minute to think about the question. Students then pair with a collaborative group member or neighbor sitting nearby and discuss their ideas about the question for several minutes. The think-pair-share structure gives all students the opportunity to discuss their ideas and construct their knowledge in these discussions. After several minutes, the instructor solicits student comments or takes a classroom "vote." The think-pair-share structure also enhances the student's oral communication skills.

Inside Outside Circle - This is a great kinesthetic activity that lasts about 10-15 minutes and involves all students in the processing or reviewing of new material. Students form two concentric circles containing the same number of students. Students in the inside circle face a partner standing in the outside circle. Students in the inside circle share something with their partner. Then students reverse roles and the students in the outside circle share with their partner. The inside circle rotates, students face their new partner and repeat this pattern until everyone has a firm grasp of the material.

Learning Log/Journal - Students can reflect on their learning by writing a reflective journal or a learning log. Reflecting on their learning and work helps them improve their understanding, reflect on what they have learned, and what they are trying to achieve. It encourages students to think about topics covered in class, take a position on issues, and think critically.

Graphic Organizer (web, matrix, fishbone, flowchart, Venn diagram) - Organizers are instructional tools used to illustrate written or oral statements, organize ideas, and examine relationships. Graphic organizers are helpful to average and struggling learners by helping learners arrange material in their minds.

Symbols to Reduce Language Load - A way of presenting information to help students acquiring English to learn successfully in content areas where symbols make language more accessible and comprehensible to them.

Jigsaw - A cooperative learning strategy that develops teamwork and cooperative learning skills of all students. In addition, it helps develop a depth of knowledge not possible if the students were to try and learn all of the material on their own. In its simplest form, the jigsaw strategy looks like this:
- Each student receives a portion of the materials to be introduced;
- Students leave their "home" groups and meet in "expert" groups;
- "Expert" groups discuss the material and brainstorm ways in which to present their understandings to the other members of their "home" group;
- The experts return to their "home" groups to teach their portion of the materials and to learn from the other members of their "home" group.

Word Wall -
Steps to Creating a Word Wall
Identify the key vocabulary words that students need to know for a specific topic or reading assignment. Print the words in large block letters on cards for posting on a prominent (always visible) wall or bulletin board. Post the word cards as the terms are confronted in classroom discussion or reading. Regularly review the terms on the Word Wall.
Assessment related to Word Wall
Teachers assess both the process and products of learning during regular instructional times. Classroom assessments are authentic, multidimensional, collaborative, and ongoing. You might consider the following when assessing student use of the word wall in your classroom: word wall reading, portfolios of words, assessment rubrics, spelling, anecdotal records, and observations.

Anticipation Guide - When using prediction skills this strategy gets new or weak readers to first use predictions from book covers, book flaps, style, voice, and excerpts in order to help them anticipate the "big ideas" that will be revealed.

Guess-the-Fib - Teams use this cooperative structure to try and trick each other with true and false statements about what they are learning. They share with other teams and explain and correct false statements. (These should be in the form of positive statements.)

Vocabulary Organizers - Any method used to organize a student's vocabulary work that promotes an in-depth understanding of a word: multiple meanings, word families, synonyms, antonyms, prefixes, suffixes, or roots.

KWL - A three-column chart that helps capture the before, during, and after components of reading a text selection.
   K stands for **Know:** This is the prior <u>knowledge</u> activation question.
   W stands for **Will** or **Want:** What do I think I <u>will</u> learn about this topic?   What do I <u>want</u> to
     know about this topic?
   L stands for **Learned:** What have I <u>learned</u> about this topic?

Rubric/Checklist - During instruction, students create and/or are given rubrics or checklists that clearly specify student behaviors sought through performance assessments. Students record their own progress for each standard they are learning: does not meet, meets, or exceeds. Students have copies of the standards they are learning and are informed about what they need to do to be able to meet and exceed standards.

Self-Assessment/Peer Assessment - Rubrics and checklists are used for *self/peer/and teacher assessment*. Often a common rubric can be used for tasks that reflect differentiation.

Physical Demonstration - To express academic concepts without speech, students can point or use other gestures. They can also be asked to perform hands-on tasks or to act out vocabulary, concepts, or events. As a comprehension check in a unit on Native Americans, for example, teachers can ask students to respond with thumbs up, thumbs down, or other nonverbal signs to true or false statements or to indicate whether the teacher has grouped illustrations (of homes, food, environment, clothing, etc.) under the correct tribe name. The teacher can use a checklist to record student responses over time.

Pictorial Products - To elicit content knowledge without requiring students to speak or write, teachers can ask students to produce and manipulate drawings, dioramas, models, graphs, and charts. When studying Colonial America, for example, teachers can give students a map of the colonies and labels with the names of the colonies. Students can then attempt to place the labels in the appropriate locations. This labeling activity can be used across the curriculum with diagrams, webs, and illustrations.

To culminate a unit on butterflies, teachers can ask beginning ESL students to illustrate, rather than explain, the life cycle of butterflies. Students can point to different parts of a butterfly on their own drawing or on a diagram as an assessment of vocabulary retention. Pictorial journals can be kept during the unit to record observations of the butterflies in the classroom or to illustrate comprehension of classroom material about types of butterflies, their habitats, and their characteristics.

Modified traditional assessment:

- bilingual dictionary allowed
- extended time
- flexible setting
- labeling & fill-ins
- modified length
- modified number of question
- open-note, open-book
- reduction of non-essential text
- word banks

Portfolios - used to collect samples of student work over time to track student development. The following types of materials can be included in a portfolio:

- audio and videotaped recordings of readings or oral presentations;
- writing samples such as dialogue journal entries, book reports, writing assignments (drafts or final copies), reading log entries, or other writing projects;
- art work such as pictures or drawings, and graphs and charts;
- conference or interview notes and anecdotal records;
- checklists (by teacher, peers, or student);s
- tests and quizzes.