

Working with your ELL student – Beginning Fluency

ELL (English Language Learner) students may benefit from some simple accommodations during your lessons.

Best practices for working with an ELL student:

- Use clear, concise language – focus on repetition and consistency.
 - Instead of “I hope you’re ready to get started with the lesson today!”, try “Let’s begin!”.
- Speak slowly and increase your response time.
 - ELL students may need more time to process information and respond.
- If your student is not understanding instructions or struggling in any way with the lesson content, let your Reading Specialist know ASAP.

Things to consider!

- Though your student may not have the language to fully express themselves in English, this doesn’t mean they aren’t able to do so in their first language. This can be a frustrating experience.
- Embrace your student’s accent! Accents are wonderful qualities that exemplify diversity and your student’s individual experiences. Ensure your student is pronouncing the target letter sound/phonics pattern without being overly critical of their unique voice.



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Focus on gestures!

Incorporate gestures (with language) to help your student decode speech:

- Mime vocabulary and language.
- Use exaggerated facial expressions and cues.
- Pair verbal praise with thumbs up and clapping.

Think show
AND tell.

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Take that extra step!

To foster a Growth Mindset...

Ask your student to teach you some words in their first language, perhaps as a Brain Break activity! This will show your student that you're both working towards learning something new and challenging, mistakes will be made, but that's okay – you're learning and building new skills together!

Or, if you already speak your student's first language, share your journey to learning a second language and the obstacles you overcame.

