AIM HIGH

ENGLISH LEARNER TOOLKIT

This Toolkit is designed to support Aim High teachers and staff to provide the best possible academic and social opportunities for our English Learners during the summer.

The Toolkit is organized as follows:

1. Introduction and context
2. Overview of Best Practices for Teaching Adolescent English Language Learners
3. Specific strategies by Subject Area
4. Activities to support students arranged by the Aim High C.O.R.E. value area
5. Glossary

The vast majority of this Toolkit is based on the text: ***Big Ideas for Expanding Minds: Teaching English Language Learners across the Curriculum*** **by Jim Cummins and Margaret Early. Published in 2015 by Pearson Canada.**

©Shutterstock.com/Qvasimodo

Part 1. Introduction and Context:

At Aim High we are committed to serving all of our students in reaching their goals and improving their educational outcomes. During the summer we do not have a specific designated English Language Development time. In order to meet student needs it is important to teach language across the curriculum in our STEM, Humanities and Issues and Choices classrooms. This toolkit is designed to support teachers in this work.

19 percent of California students are considered English Language Learners. At Aim High we have collected the following data regarding students' home languages:

Home Language

1725 of 1728 reported

Spanish	Chinese	Vietnamese	Tagalog	Korean	Arabic	Other	English
642	363	6	4	0	2	44	664
37.2%	21%	.3%	.2%	0%	.1%	2.6%	38.5%

Not English: 1061, 61.5%

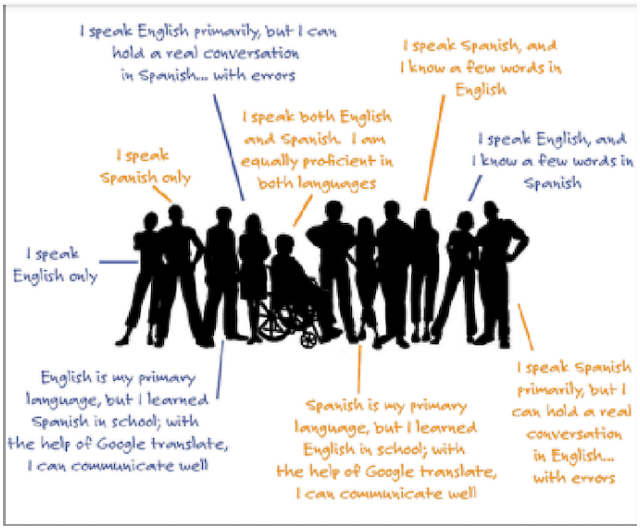
Request for Translated Materials

1728 of 1728 reported

Chinese	Spanish	English Only
151	458	1119
8.7%	26.5%	64.8%

While not all students who speak another language at home are English language Learners, it is clear that at a minimum 38.5% of our students speak or are exposed to a language other than English in their home, primarily Spanish and Chinese (Cantonese).

Designation of English Language Learners:



In California there are three levels used to classify English language Learners. It is likely that every Aim High classroom will have some students who fall into one of these groupings.

Emerging: Students at this level typically progress very quickly, learn to use English for immediate needs, and begin to understand and use academic language for the grade level, with substantial language support provided.

At Aim High, the majority of students who fall into the Emerging category are newcomers who recently arrived to the US.

Expanding: Students at this level use their growing language skills in more advanced ways that are appropriate to their age and grade level, with moderate language support provided.

At Aim High, the majority of students who fall into this category may have arrived to the US recently (3-5 years ago.) or they may be students who are considered Long Term ELLs who have been enrolled in US schools since kindergarten or 1st grade, but who have not made expected progress.

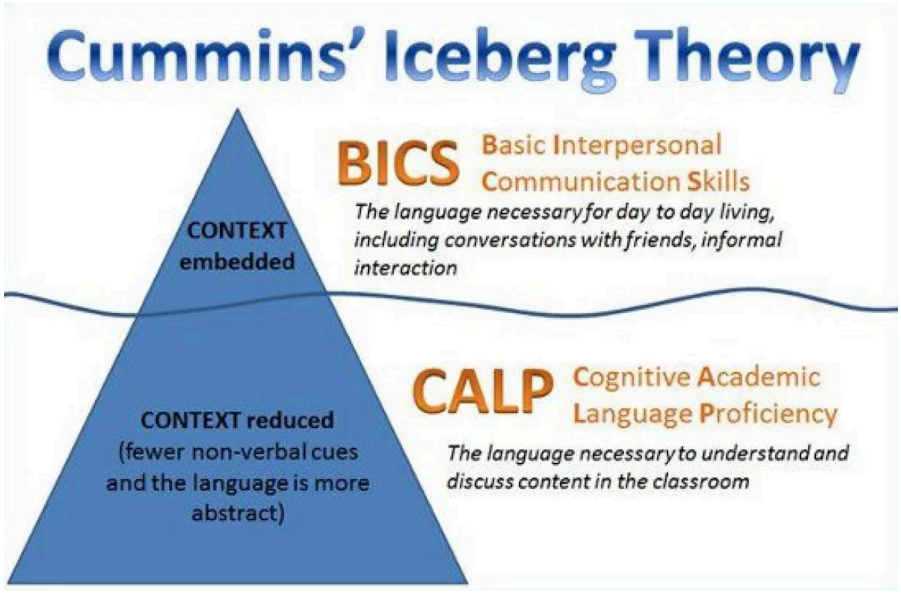
Bridging: Students at this level can independently use a variety of high-level English language skills and fully participate in grade-level academic activities in all content areas, with light language support provided.

At Aim High, many students are likely in this category. These students likely have made progress in their skills progressively from grade level to grade level and are close to being reclassified as Fluent English Proficient.

Part 2: Overview of Best Practices for teaching adolescent English Language Learners

Researchers have concluded that certain practices are essential to support students who are English Language Learners in the regular classroom. Tamara Lucas and colleagues' have identified **six principles that can serve as a foundation for teaching ELLs in subject matter classrooms:**

1. **Conversational Language proficiency is fundamentally different from academic language proficiency.**

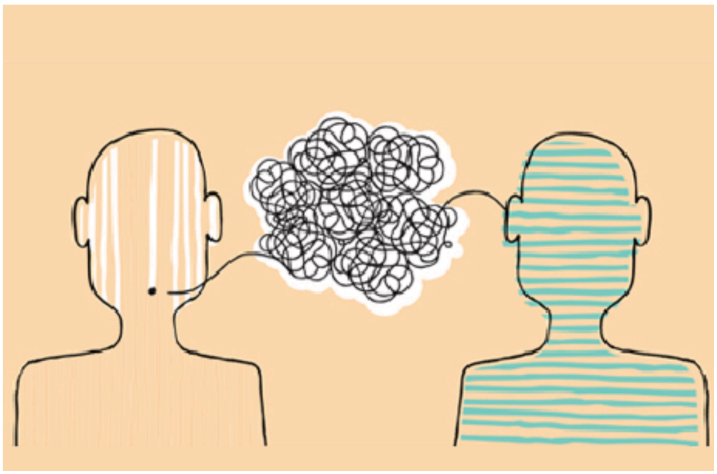


Many English learner students who come to AIM High may have strong interpersonal English Language Skills but they will need support to understand and discuss content in the classroom.

2. **ELLs must have access to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current level of competence and also opportunities to use language for meaningful purposes.**

3. ***Comprehensible Input** means that the students must understand what is being taught. This component HEAVILY relies on visual aids, facial expression, and pictures. A picture is worth a thousand words, as the saying goes, and this is a great place to start. To facilitate this process, the material must be simple, and it must be familiar. Remembering to have materials from the **student's culture of origin** can aid greatly with comprehensible input. **One way to do this is to read stories that are slightly above student's current reading level aloud and discussing using talk moves.***

4. **Active participation in social interaction fosters the development of conversational and academic English.**



Students who have opportunities to socialize and work together in heterogenous groups will learn English faster and co-construct knowledge.

5. **ELLs with strong home language (L1) skills are more likely to catch up academically than those with weak L1 skills.**
   Using Home Language as a Resource **(Video)**
   In California we are striving to have our students leave our schools fully Bilingual and Biliterate, with strong L1 and L2 skills. Sometimes students will come to us with weak L1 skills due to interrupted education. In this case it is even more important to support their language development in both of their emergent languages (i.e. le languages they are learning).

- **ELLs will learn more effectively in a safe, welcoming classroom environment that does not generate anxiety about performing in English (L2).**

Consider the use of Transformative Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) practices to support English Language Learners. "Transformative SEL" is a form of SEL implementation ***where young people and adults build strong, respectful, and lasting relationships to engage in co-learning.*** *Through Transformative SEL, students and adults develop social and emotional skills needed for school and community engagement, with a focus on rights and responsibilities for creating learning environments that are caring and just. These practices will support English Language Learners as they access more challenging aspects of the curriculum.*

6. **Explicit attention to linguistic form and function is essential to L2 learning.**

Academic English is different from everyday, or informal, English. There are some features of academic English that cut across the disciplines, such as general academic vocabulary (e.g., evaluate, infer, resist), but there is also variation depending upon the subject matter (for example, Math or Science specific vocabulary). Teaching about the grammatical patterns of academic English in intellectually engaging ways within the subject matter content promotes EL students' reading comprehension and writing development. Paying attention to Grammar and Vocabulary is extremely important for English Language learning.

Part 3. Specific strategies to Support English language Learners by AIM HIGH Subject Area Below are some subject matter strategies that can help you when working with your English Learner students.

Humanities:

a. Motivate students to engage with literacy by looking for books that represent them
b. Frontload vocabulary and teach it intentionally
c. Focus on one "Juicy Sentence" each day focusing on language structure and function
d. Help ELLs to Craft Vibrant, Imaginative Sentences
e. Use Wordless Picture Books to Support Learning in English/ Language Arts
f. Co-construct concept maps when introducing new social studies concepts

STEM:

a. Use visual cues, manipulatives, pictures, diagrams, and graphic organizers
b. Pay attention to the clarity of instructions; modeling of preferred ways of working in mathematics and science; and previewing of textbooks
c. Pre-teach key specialized vocabulary and the language of scientific inquiry
d. Encourage of peer tutoring and class discussion
   strategic use of students' first languages'
e. Demonstration/modeling.
f. Use of hands-on manipulatives, tools, and technology.
g. Whole class and small-group project work.
h. Language clarification
i. Connect Math and science concepts to students' lives

Issues and Choices and Advisory:

a. Create idea maps to connect vocabulary to concepts
b. Use Visuals
c. Group work
d. Dramatization/act out scenarios
e. Provide Sentence frames to support student writing
f. Use L1 as needed when students are researching
g. Lean into Transformative SEL practices to support student identity
h. Use technology tools for translation of research concept from L1 to L2

Part 4. Activities to support students by C.O.R.E. value area

Community:

Incorporate students' ways of knowing into projects and lessons.

- ★ Use culturally responsive/sustaining practices - acknowledge students previous knowledge, backgrounds and cultures.
- ★ Provide opportunities within class for students to learn and share about their families, cultures, communities, interests, and perspectives.
- ★ Leverage students' home languages, backgrounds, and cultural knowledge as assets that can strengthen project work.
- ★ Provide frequent opportunities for students to reflect on who they are as learners and how they are growing and changing through their projects.

Example Activities that Support Community:

- ★ **Sample Lesson Plan: Generating Classroom Shared Agreements - Casel Schoolguide** (This can be used in all classes)
- ★ Identity Charts: Identity charts help students consider the many factors that shape who we are as individuals and as communities. An identity chart is a diagram that individuals fill in with words and phrases they use to describe themselves as well as the labels that society gives them. Teachers can use this activity for students to get to know themselves and each other. Adding images to the chart can make it more accessible to English Language Learners. (Issues and Choices, Humanities and Advisory)

Opportunity

- ★ Provide students with the opportunity to design, develop, and construct hands-on solutions to a problem
- ★ Support students in acquiring efficient learning strategies (e.g., planning tasks, visualization, grouping/classifying, note-taking/summarizing, questioning for clarification, making use of multiple resources for task completion)
- ★ Differentiate Instruction to provide opportunity for students

Example Activities that support Opportunity

- ★ Provide the opportunity for students to Draw their Thinking:.The Science of Drawing and Memory (STEM)
- ★ Six Strategies for Effective Learning: https://www.learningscientists.org/ (STEM, Humanities)

https://www.learningscientists.org/downloadable-materials/

★ Differentiate for English Language Learners **(STEM, Humanities):**
Differentiating Instruction: A Guide for Teaching English-Language Learners

Respect

★ Incorporate students' native languages (L1) into Instruction
★ Use technology to support students with limited English, in their own language
★ Teach the idea of Respect as part of your vocabulary activities

Example Activities that support Respect:

★ **Incorporating Students' Native Languages to Enhance Their Learning (STEM)**
★ **Explicitly teach the idea of respect: Respect lessons and activities (Advisory, Issues and Choices)**
★ **How to use technology to support the English Language Learners in your classroom (STEM)**

High Expectations

Students who are learning English are **not defined by their current limitations in that language**. They have similar intellectual capabilities and are just as anxious to use their minds in powerful and imaginative ways as their peers who learned English their first language.

- Take into account **what students already know**, including primary language and culture, and relating it to what they are to learn.
- Provide a **variety of opportunities for collaborative group work** where all students have an equitable chance to participate.
- Use a **range of information systems**, such as graphic organizers, diagrams, photographs, videos, or other multimedia to enhance **access to content**.
- Provide students with **language models**, such as sentence frames/starters, academic vocabulary walls, language frame charts, exemplary writing samples, or teacher language modeling (e.g., using academic vocabulary or phrasing)
- Ensure students have opportunities to apply their learning and present their learning to peers and the community at large.

Example Activities that support High Expectations

- ★ **Navigating Tough Topics with English Language Learners: Toolkit (Advisory, Issues and Choices)**
- ★ **Teach students about Growth Mindset: Overcoming Obstacles Lesson Plans (Advisory, Issues and Choices)**

Part 5. Glossary (From Colorín Colorado)

Academic English
The English language ability required for academic achievement in context-reduced situations, such as classroom lectures and textbook reading assignments. This is sometimes referred to as Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).

Affective filter
The affective filter is a metaphor that describes a learner's attitudes that affect the relative success of second language acquisition. Negative feelings such as lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence and learning anxiety act as filters that hinder and obstruct language learning. This term is associated with linguist Stephen Krashen's Monitor Model of second language learning.

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)
Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) is often referred to as "playground English", "survival English", or "social language." It is the basic language ability required for face-to-face communication where linguistic interactions are embedded in a situational context called context-embedded language. BICS is part of a theory of language proficiency developed by Jim Cummins. BICS, which is highly contextualized and often accompanied by gestures, is cognitively undemanding and relies on context to aid understanding. BICS is much more easily and quickly acquired than academic language (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency, or CALP), but is not sufficient to meet the cognitive and linguistic demands of an academic classroom.

Bicultural
Identifying with the cultures of two different ethnic, national, or language groups. To be bicultural is not necessarily the same as being bilingual. In fact, you can even identify with two different language groups without being bilingual, as is the case with many Latinos in the U.S.

Bilingualism
Bilingualism is the ability to use two languages. However, defining bilingualism can be problematic since there may be variation in proficiency across the four language dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and differences in proficiency

between the two languages. People may become bilingual either by acquiring two languages at the same time in childhood or by learning a second language sometime after acquiring their first language.

Biliteracy
Biliteracy is the ability to effectively communicate or understand written thoughts and ideas through the grammatical systems, vocabularies, and written symbols of two different languages.

Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)
Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) is the language ability required for academic achievement in a context-reduced environment. Examples of context-reduced environments include classroom lectures and textbook reading assignments, where there are few environmental cues (facial expressions, gestures) that help students understand the content. CALP is part of a theory of language developed by Jim Cummins, and is distinguished from Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS).

Content area
Content areas are academic subjects like math, science, English/language arts, reading, and social sciences. Language proficiency may affect these areas, but is not included as a content area.

cooperative learning
A teaching model involving students working together as partners or in small groups on clearly defined tasks. It has been used successfully to teach comprehension strategies in content-area subjects.

Content area
Content areas are academic subjects like math, science, English/language arts, reading, and social sciences. Language proficiency may affect these areas, but is not included as a content area.

Differentiated Instruction
An approach to teaching that includes planning out and executing various approaches to content, process, and product. Differentiated instruction is used to meet the needs of student differences in readiness, interests, and learning needs.

Digital Literacy
Digital literacy is the ability to effectively navigate, evaluate, and generate information using digital technology (e.g. computers, software, digital devices, and the Internet).

direct vocabulary learning
Explicit instruction in both the meanings of individual words and word-learning strategies. Direct vocabulary instruction aids reading comprehension.
Domain-Specific Words and Phrases*
Vocabulary specific to a particular field of study (domain), such as the human body (CCSS, p. 33); in the Standards, domain-specific words and phrases are analogous to Tier Three words (Language, p. 33).

Dominant language
The dominant language is the language with which a bilingual or multilingual speaker has greatest proficiency and/or uses more often. See primary language.
dual language learner
A child who is learning a second language while continuing to develop his/her home language.

English Language Development (ELD)
English language development (ELD) means instruction designed specifically for English language learners to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. This type of instruction is also known as:

- English as a second language (ESL)

English learners (ELs): Other names for this student population

- Dual-language learners
- Bilingual/multilingual students

English Language Proficiency (ELP)
In order to master academic language, English learners must develop proficiency in the four domains of language:

- speaking
- reading
- listening
- writing.

First Language
See "native language." Sometimes referred to as L1 in short-hand.

Graphic Organizers

Text, diagram or other pictorial device that summarizes and illustrates interrelationships among concepts in a text. Graphic organizers are often known as maps, webs, graphs, charts, frames, or clusters.

Home Language
See "native language."

Language Proficiency
To be proficient in a second language means to effectively communicate or understand thoughts or ideas through the language's grammatical system and its vocabulary, using its sounds or written symbols. Language proficiency is composed of oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) components as well as academic and non-academic language (Hargett, 1998).

listening comprehension
Understanding speech. Listening comprehension, as with reading comprehension, can be described in "levels" lower levels of listening comprehension would include understanding only the facts explicitly stated in a spoken passage that has very simple syntax and uncomplicated vocabulary. Advanced levels of listening comprehension would include implicit understanding and drawing inferences from spoken passages that feature more complicated syntax and more advanced vocabulary.

literacy
Reading, writing, and the creative and analytical acts involved in producing and comprehending texts.
long-term English language learner
A student who has been enrolled in U.S. schools for more than six years but continues to struggle academically due to limited English proficiency.

Mainstream
"Mainstream" is a term that refers to the ordinary classroom that almost all children attend. Accommodations may be made for children with disabilities or who are English language learners, as part of the general educational program.

Native language
The first language a person acquires in life, or identifies with as a member of an ethnic group. This term variably means (a) the language learned from the mother, (b) the first language learned, (c) the native language of an area or country, (d) the stronger (or dominant) language at any time of life, (e) the language used most by a person, (f) the

language toward which the person has the more positive attitude and affection (Baker, 2000). Also referred to "home language" or "mother tongue."

Primary language
The primary language is the language in which bilingual/multilingual speakers are most fluent, or which they prefer to use. This is not necessarily the language first learned in life. See also dominant language.

Scaffolding*
Temporary guidance or assistance provided to a student by a teacher, another adult, or a more capable peer, enabling the student to perform a task he or she otherwise would not be able to do alone, with the goal of fostering the student's capacity to perform the task on his or her own later on.

vocabulary
Vocabulary refers to the words a reader or speaker knows the meaning of and can understand and use. Listening vocabulary refers to the words a person knows when hearing them in oral speech. Speaking vocabulary refers to the words a person is able to use in his or her own speech. Reading vocabulary refers to the words a person knows when seeing them in print. Writing vocabulary refers to the words a person is able to use in his or her own writing.