



READING STRATEGIES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Annotation: *Reading in a new language can be challenging. English Language Learners (ELLs) may understand some words but still feel confused about the main idea of a text. Two helpful reading strategies are finding key words and annotating the text. These strategies help students understand what they read and remember important information.*

Key words: *Reading strategies, English language learners.*

Effective reading strategies for English Language Learners (ELLs) focus on building background, vocabulary, and comprehension through techniques like pre-reading activation (previewing text, discussing prior knowledge), during-reading engagement (questioning, finding main ideas, using context clues), and post-reading reinforcement (summarizing, retelling, connecting to self).

Utilizing assisted reading, graphic organizers, visuals, and high-interest materials also boosts confidence and understanding by reducing cognitive load and making learning more accessible and engaging. Students who are learning English as a second language require mastery of foundational reading skills to become proficient readers and writers in English. Effective instruction tailored to English learners (ELs) is vital for achieving literacy mastery in the classroom.

One of the most effective strategies for ELLs is previewing the text before reading. By looking at the title, headings, subheadings, pictures, charts, and bolded words, learners can activate prior knowledge and predict the content.

This strategy prepares students for the information they are about to read and reduces cognitive overload

Another important strategy is identifying key information. Informational texts often include main ideas, supporting details, and examples. ELLs benefit from learning how to highlight or underline key words and phrases that signal important information, such as definitions, causes, effects, and examples. This helps learners focus on meaning rather than translating every word.

Vocabulary support is also crucial when working with informational texts. Pre-teaching academic and subject-specific vocabulary enables ELLs to understand the content more easily.

Creating personal glossaries, using visuals, and connecting new words to students' first language can significantly improve comprehension.

Annotating the text is another useful strategy. Annotation allows learners to interact with the text by writing brief notes, symbols, or questions in the margins.

For example, students may write short summaries, mark confusing sections, or note important facts. This active engagement supports deeper understanding and retention of information.



Chunking the text into smaller sections helps ELLs manage long or complex informational passages. After reading each section, students can pause to summarize the information or discuss it with a partner.

This strategy prevents overload and promotes gradual comprehension.

Graphic organizers such as charts, tables, and concept maps help ELLs organize information visually. Informational texts often include lists, comparisons, and cause-and-effect relationships, which can be clearly represented through visual tools. Activate Background Knowledge: Discuss what students already know about the topic using KWL charts (Know, Want to Know, Learned) or simple questions Preview the Text: Look at titles, headings, pictures, and captions to get a sense of the content.

Pre-Teach Vocabulary: Introduce key words and concepts that might be challenging. Set a Purpose: Establish guiding questions or a clear goal for reading Comprehension is the reason for reading, but it can be the most difficult skill to master — especially for English language learners (ELLs). ELLs often have problems learning science, math, or social studies concepts, for example, because they cannot comprehend the textbooks for these subjects.

ELLs at all levels of English proficiency and literacy development will benefit from improved comprehension skills, which allow them to: read more accurately follow a text or story more closely identify important events and concepts in a text master new concepts in their content-area classes complete assignments and assessments feel motivated to read in school and for pleasure.

There are a number of ways to build ELLs' comprehension skills. Often standard strategies that are used in mainstream classrooms are a good starting point — they just need to be tweaked with ELLs' language and academic needs in mind! This article focuses on strategies that are part of three main approaches: building background knowledge, teaching vocabulary explicitly, and checking comprehension frequently. EL classrooms are dynamic environments with students whose reading and English language skills vary widely. To effectively support these students, teachers must employ strategic instructional approaches that cater to diverse language proficiency levels.

One common challenge ELs face is learning to decode and acquire advanced work study skills in order to then subscribe meaning to what they have read. Without the decoding skill, comprehension can be hindered and lead to disengagement. Teachers can address this issue by providing explicit instruction in phonics, morphology and vocabulary to help students comprehend what they read. For example, introducing subject matter that relates to students' interests or cultural backgrounds can help them feel seen, valued, and less frustrated with the reading and writing process.

English learners (ELs) bring with them the vocabulary in their home language, which can help in making connections to vocabulary in English. This existing vocabulary can assist in their ability to grasp the English language, especially when coupled with systematic and explicit instruction when teach vocabulary.

Acquiring New vocabulary: To support ELs in acquiring new vocabulary, teachers should expose them to a variety of authentic language materials, such as texts, audio



recordings, videos, and real-life situations. One effective strategy is to have students highlight familiar and unfamiliar keywords using a color code.

This practice empowers students to identify words they aren't sure of and reference those they understand, providing them with more control over their learning process and opportunities to apply their background knowledge.

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