



Working with learners who have Limited English Proficiency

Individuals who are described as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are those who:

- Were not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
- Come from environments where a language other than English is dominant; or
- Have sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny those individuals the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to participate fully in our society.

Limited English-Proficient Learner

- Difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English
- Limited opportunity for success in English-speaking classrooms
- Speaks at a slow pace
- Incomplete documentation of past academic experiences
- Low self-esteem
- Afraid to acknowledge misunderstanding
- May require English as a second language (ESL) services
- Native customs may encourage different work habits
- Difficulty comprehending
- Lack of employment orientation skills
- Lack of job survival skills
- Comes from environment where language other than English is dominant
- Difficulty establishing interpersonal skills
- Cultural differences
- Native language is not English
- Low reading level

Strategies for working with learners who are classified as LEP include:

Teaching Strategies and Behaviors for Working with Limited English Proficient Students		
Teaching Behaviors	Teaching Strategies	Other LEP Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw connections between content and real life. • Speak slowly and clearly in a normal tone of voice. • Repeat key phrases. • Stress the main words in a sentence. • Ask students yes/no questions to determine if they understand the concept. • Check frequently for comprehension. • Break information into reasonable chunks. • Limit new vocabulary per lesson or unit. • Allow a variety of student response modes (oral, visual, and translations by other students). • Ask factual questions first, then higher order thinking questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate, dramatize, and use body language • Use visuals (photos, illustrations, maps, and charts). • Use graphic organizers (trees, webs, Venn diagrams, etc). • Use cooperative learning. • Use peer tutoring. • Use multiple assessment strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students cannot wait to speak English fluently before being deemed ready for classroom instruction. • Determine if students understand the science but not the language, or the language but not the science by answering the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Do they know the word in their language?</i> ○ <i>Do they know the word in their second language?</i> ○ <i>Do they know the concept in either language?</i>