

50 Things I wish I'd Known When I started Teaching ELL

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1. The 4 Fs
 - Firm, fair, friendly and fun
2. Set the bar high
 - Challenge your students. It's not just coloring and cutting
3. It's not about me
 - It's about the students. Start where they are. You need to help with content and with the classroom teachers to improve academic literacy
4. BICS vs CALP
 - BICS-Social English takes 1-2 years
 - CALP-Academic English takes 5-10 years
5. Work smarter not harder
 - Don't mark everything, don't reinvent and collaborate
6. Puppets
 - Use puppets for dialogues. Students love this.
7. First Language use
 - Honor L1. Students can work in L1 and it increases English learning
8. Oral language use
 - Strengthen oral skills. Can do brainstorming, pre-reading, pre-writing
9. Props and costumes
 - Use old phones etc. Go to Value Village. Can use for dialogues. Develops Vocab
10. Be proactive with parents
 - Send out FAQ, ELL Book Lists etc
11. Metaphors and Similes-not idioms
 - More useful to transfer information to the regular classroom.
12. Autobiographical Writing
 - Example: Before the move, airport scene, the trip over, first week, now and future
 - 25 pages
 - Make into a book
 - Art/graphics
 - Verb tense
 - Revise and edit
 - Parent gift
13. Everyone Participates and often
 - Even shy students need to participate
14. Word walls
 - Can use in Secondary also
15. Visuals and Realia
 - Builds background knowledge SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol)
 - Helping everyone access the curriculum
 - Adapting/Scaffolding to differentiate
 - Be mindful of class (LD, Resource, ELL, ADHD etc)
16. Think Aloud
 - Scaffold methods

17. Western Allusions
 - Can teach Little Red Riding Hood, Snow White etc (puppets)
18. Gestural Cues
 - A way for students to remember
19. Reading!!
 - Promote reading in L1 or English at home.
 - Read a book a month for bonus marks
20. Conferencing with writers
 - One on one-talk to each student about writing
21. Be gentle with remediation
 - Paraphrase back-don't correct each pronunciation error
22. Learn a few words of each students' L1
 - Hello, goodbye
23. Increase student interactions
 - Students should be talking 50% of the time
24. Exemplars and rubrics
 - You should always justify your marking
25. Laugh at yourself
26. Ask ELLs higher order questions
 - Don't just ask yes/no questions. Ask why.
27. Academic Literacy needed for academic success
 - SIOP-need to provide academic literacy
28. Thrift Stores
 - Buy puppets, costumes, books
29. Write with your students
 - Modelling, scaffolding, it gives students ideas
30. Allow yourself to be a lunatic
31. "You be the teacher"
 - Collect sentences from students and pick out 1 typical error from each (SVA, SF, ROS, CS, T, PWW, WF)
 - In groups fix
32. Narrow the vocabulary gap
 - Take one word and make 12
33. Focus on Tier 2 Vocabulary (T1-they bring, T2 cross curricular-describe, explain T3 specialized)
 - Hpcsd.org (Vocabulary Lists by Grade)
 - Tumble Books
 - Dave's ESL Café
 - Boggles world
 - Reading A-Z
 - Raz kids
 - Aps-barefoot, jumble, 1 speak
34. Read to your students
35. If parents want extra work
 - Tell them the students should read
36. Scary writing contest
 - Write in 20 minutes-original work
 - Top 3

37. Demystify Shakespeare
 - Play, graphic novels
38. Stargirl
 - Good book to teach to Grade 10,11 ELL
39. ELLs have important things to say
 - They need to know they have a lot to say and they have stories to tell
40. Build a Breadth of vocabulary
 - Teach range ie sad: melancholy, blue, unhappy, upset, morose
41. Honor special days
 - Cultural holidays
42. Phrasal verbs
 - Take in, take out, take off, take on, take away, take back
43. SIOP
 - Pulling kids up-good teaching practices
 - This concept going across North America
 - Good for ELL kids-helps everyone
44. Valentine's Day Love Story Contest
45. Teach Reading Strategies
46. The essay writer as a lawyer
 - Argue like a lawyer
 - Convince the reader
47. Grammar and vocabulary in context
48. Present Tense vs simple past
 - Teach unspecified/specified time
49. One matrix-different colours
 - Use same matrix but different colours so parents can see improvements. Make key
50. Enjoy