

## Learning to Read – for Primary ELLs

- ESL students entering in the primary years may not have fully developed literacy in their L1; if parents do not continue the process of learning to read and enjoy literature in the first language, students may take longer to acquire English literacy. It is important to encourage parents to read to their children in their L1 and help them become literate whenever possible. Providing information on bilingual or dual language resources may be very helpful. Validating the child's first literacy by inviting parents to share stories/books with your class is a great idea.
- Some ESL students may not have had experiences that help them to build phonemic awareness; this may occur because their L1 does not have a written form, they do not have any books at home in their L1, or parents feared that if they read to them in the L1 it might hurt their chances of learning English. Encourage parents to read to their child or take them to programs at their local library where they can enjoy storytelling hour. Have older students come to read to the students or create listening centres where kids can listen and follow along to books on tape/CD.
- ELLs need:
  - Alphabet letter names and sounds
  - An awareness of the purpose of written text, the cadence and rhythm of English, and how written words can provide a rich experience
  - An awareness of how words are made of consonants and vowels – decoding
  - A repertoire of the most frequently occurring sight words (Dolch)
  - Experience with building, sequencing, and playing with sentences and patterns of written language

## Learning to Read – for Junior ELLs

ESL – ELLs with first language literacy need time to adapt to the English alphabet and phonetic system, but once they have had some direct intervention, they will quickly adapt and be able to ‘catch up’ to their English speaking peers. Avoid strategies for reading that require vocabulary comprehension such as using contextual clues or word substitution. You can facilitate this transition by providing opportunities for the students to study basic decoding and phonics through tutors. Literacy websites, or CALL software. Provide books at a level slightly below your students’ decoding level; this will allow them to read smoothly and focus on comprehending the text. Check for progress regularly and move the student up, celebrating their successes as they acquire skills for reading efficiently.

ELD – ELLs with no prior literacy need direct intervention to help them learn both phonemic awareness and basic literacy skills. Many have not had to hold a pen or pencil, use scissors or do any fine motor tasks so you will need to allow time for the development of these skills; encourage drawing, doodling, and tracing to help get kids used to pen and paper activities. Copying from the board will be slow and labour intensive for ELDs so be sure to give them lots of time and assistance. Try to find ways to break up the day so that ELLs are not overwhelmed by the requirements of your class – time with a peer tutor or buddy for language play, listening to stories and using CALL software or websites may give students a rest from the intensive demands of the classroom.

*\*Always be aware that decoding ability does not equal reading ability as reading requires both phonetic skill and comprehension.*

# Learning to Read – for Intermediate/Senior ELLs




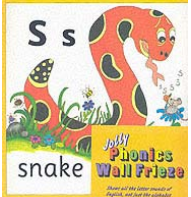




ELD – students entering the school system without literacy skills in any language need intensive support.

- 1. Find out why they don't know how to read.** Possibilities may include, disrupted schooling, lack of prior educational opportunities, learning disabilities, or no written form of their L1. In many cases parents will be able to tell you if their educational background was incomplete or did not provide literacy instruction. If you think your student was not able to learn to read even though they had the chance, they may have a learning disability; in this case you may need help from your Special Ed team to determine how best to help the student. You should also look into the possibility of physical difficulties such as vision impairment or Irlen syndrome.
- 2. Arrange for them to have designated time to focus on acquiring basic literacy skills.** Older students can benefit from CALL software such as Reading Academy; this program allows kids to work at their own pace while they acquire basic sound/letter recognition, learn to sounds out/recognize word chunks, and memorize sight words; if you don't have software, there are many literacy sites where students can work on basic skills. Students make the most progress when they learn in one-one situations where their skill levels are privately discussed and plans are made with the teacher/tutor to help them grow into fluent readers. Once students can decode in a minimal way, they can move on to graded, high interest non-fiction texts and fiction based novels; the more reading they do the faster they progress so try to provide texts which are just above their level and are geared to their interests.
- 3. Follow up periodically to keep track of progress and ensure that they have appropriately challenging reading materials.** Test regularly to gauge learning. Keep kids interested by making the objectives for reading and the types of texts they read vary over time. Make sure they understand the purpose for reading, whether it is for pleasure, to gain new vocabulary, to learn patterns of writing or grammar, or to acquire study skills.... Your students need to learn not only how to read but why they should read and how to continue to improve on their own.
- 4. Ensure that classroom teachers are aware of the students' needs and can make appropriate program adaptations.** In many cases students will not be able to work for credits until they have greater literacy skills, however they can participate in classes using proctors to do oral tests/exams, recording answers and observations through assistive technology such as Dragon dictate and Write Out Loud. If students can meet the Overall Expectations for a course, then credits may be granted. It should be expected that ELD students will require more than 4 years to finish secondary diplomas.

## Learning to Read – for Intermediate/Senior ELLs (ESL)

- Older students bring a wealth of prior knowledge and L1 literacy skills that will greatly assist them in acquiring English literacy skills; capitalize on this by allowing them to use their L1 in the beginning, for notes, journals etc..., asking them to translate to English.
- Remember that ELLs who have different alphabet systems will need extra time for copying notes or completing diagrams as they must look carefully at each letter in order to transfer the words and sentences into their notebooks. It is helpful to provide them with a good copy of the notes for review that will help them fill in any gaps.
- CALL software or alphabet and phonics websites can be useful for students who have not mastered print or script and need practice.
- Ensure that classroom teachers are aware of the students' needs and can make appropriate program adaptations. In some cases students will not be able to work for credits until they have greater literacy skills, however they can participate in classes using bilingual dictionaries and electronic translators to help them make some sense of the content. Graphic organizers should be used to chunk lessons and provide a visual basis for understanding; this is helpful for all students.
- Determine what level students are able to decode at and provide books that are suitable for them in terms of decoding and interests. For novel studies or English lit, try to obtain copies of texts in plain English, or in the beginning, get a translated version.
- Tutoring for older ESL students should always focus on skills that will help them understand and work with content. Some issues to tackle early include: identifying theme, main idea, and topic sentence and conclusions. Also, students need to understand how to use features of text such as bold, italics and underlines to locate information and gain greater understanding. Formal study of plot, characterization, setting and general literary analysis will greatly enhance students' ability to cope in English classes.

# 8 Ways to Teach the Alphabet

<p><b>Logical</b></p> <p>-use flashcards to match sounds or names to letters, follow up by using the cards to play concentration</p> 	<p><b>Musical</b></p> <p>-use songs or chants to teach letter names and sounds</p> 	<p><b>Interpersonal</b></p> <p>- have pairs/small groups of students play an alphabet folder game in which they must say a letter or sound to advance or collect things</p> 	<p><b>Kinesthetic</b></p> <p>-use Jolly Phonics (finger phonics) to attach an action to each letter name and sound</p> 
<p><b>Natural</b></p> <p>-have students locate objects around the room or in the playground that start with different letters or sounds in order to create an environmental alphabet</p> 	<p><b>Intrapersonal</b></p> <p>-have students create alphabets out of clay or other materials for display</p> 	<p><b>Visual</b></p> <p>-have students make alphabet books using pictures of their favourite things from catalogues or magazines as illustrations</p> 	<p><b>Verbal</b></p> <p>-play the alphabet game by having students give names of people, foods, toys...that start with a,b,c..</p> 

Alphabet Squares		a	b	c	d	e
f	g	h	i	j	k	l
m	n	o	p	q	r	s
t	u	v	w	x	y	z

Alphabet Squares		A	B	C	D	E
F	G	H	I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P	Q	R	S
T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

	My Teeny Tiny Alphabet book	A	B	C	D	E
F	G	H	I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P	Q	R	S
T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



	<b>My Teeny Tiny Book of</b>					