

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL)

What is ELL?

ELL stands for English Language Learner and refers to anyone who did not learn English as their first and primary language. This could include a sixth grader who has been in an English-speaking classroom since kindergarten, or a ninth grader that just moved to the US last month. One ELL student might just be learning to speak English. Another might have great conversational skills but need extra help with reading and writing. ELLs come to the classroom with a broad range of experiences!



How can you show up for ELLs in the classroom?

One of the difficulties ELL students face is being treated as if a lack of fluency in English means they are not smart or cannot understand complex concepts. This is simply not true, and ALL learners deserve the same access to the curriculum. You can deliver a MEANINGFUL lesson that meets all students where they are using these tips, which will improve comprehension for all students, not only English Language Learners.



- Speak slowly and clearly
- Pause after asking a question to allow for processing before inviting responses
- Re-phrase, don't repeat, if a student is having difficulty understanding
- Show concepts visually
- Write/draw directions on the board
- Model what you want students to do
- Check for understanding with non-verbal signals

Did you know? North Dakota and Minnesota students speak nearly 300 different languages at home!

In North Dakota, German and Spanish are the top non-English languages spoken at home.

(2016 North Dakota Department of Commerce)

In Minnesota, Spanish, Somali, and Hmong are the top non-English languages spoken at home.

(2019 Minnesota Department of Education)

More Resources to Explore:

[Dos and Don'ts of Teaching ELL Students](#)
[12 Ways to Support ELL Students in the Mainstream Classroom](#)
[8 Strategies for Building Relationships with ELLs in Any Learning Environment](#)
[Video: ELLs Belong to All of Us](#)