

Workshop, Grades 2-3

English Learners

Although English Learners may have difficulty articulating their ideas in English, their ideas are no less sophisticated. Share your enthusiasm and excitement about research with all your students. Facilitate interaction and communication through cooperative tasks and problem-solving.

The following are suggestions for helping students achieve success while using the inquiry/exploration cycle:

- Have students consult sources that are a bit easier to read for their grade level.
- Encourage English Learners to consult references written in their native languages and summarize them in English. Although they may have some difficulty translating the ideas and information into English for use with their research groups, they will be able to do research on their own level. This may be added to the information they gather through English-language sources.
- Pair English-proficient students with English-language learners. Have the English-proficient students read to the English Learners from more conceptually difficult books, explaining the important principles.
- Have students use books containing pictures, charts, and other visuals. However, make sure they select content-rich sources of information.
- Remind students of alternative sources, such as interviews and movies.
- Suggest to students options for presenting their findings, such as visual presentations for the class accompanied by written papers in their primary languages.

Use questioning, problem explanation, and clarifying

All students need to feel free to pose questions, explain their problems, and share and evaluate their own ideas for solving those problems. Questioning, problem explanation, and clarifying are strategies readers use in combination. Questions make it possible for students to focus their attention and ask more questions, and for teachers to understand students' needs. Once they have some knowledge from their research, students can learn to ask about causes and effects, why things happened, possible solutions, and how events in a story or a real situation affect their lives.

Provide help to students as needed in stating questions, suggesting words such as *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *how*, and *why*. By asking open-ended and important questions, students are encouraged to explore the possibilities for learning in the text and to connect the meaning of the text to the world and their own lives.

Do not correct language errors of English Learners, such as those of tense, ending, or word order. Rather, restate or model the correct form following a student's question or response, maintaining the student's original content. Listening to students, valuing their ideas, and encouraging them to ask questions and share new information demonstrate the importance of having good listening skills and respect for class diversity.

Give concrete examples and explanations of key ideas and vocabulary. To clarify the meaning of vocabulary, idioms, and complex sentences, use props, objects, and visual aids. Once students clarify a word or a phrase, discuss what the word has to do with the research, or with your students' lives in general. Visual examples of concepts are available on the Internet.