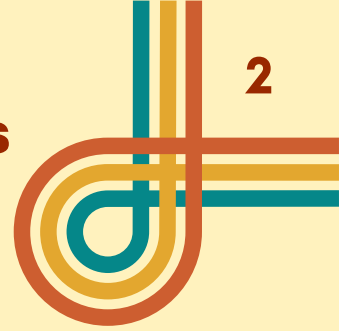


Teaching Lower-Level Learners

General Tips & Best Practices

- **Make connections** - Learn about students backgrounds, family, likes, struggles
- **Safe learning environment** - create a space where students can be comfortable, both in the design of the space but also in the way you treat them.
- **Speak slower, not slowly** - Slow down your normal rate of speech to enable your students to understand what you are saying.
- **Enunciate words clearly** - To set an example and to be understood
- **Simplify language** - phrases not sentences
- **Save courtesy until later** - Students have limited vocabulary and should not be bogged down by extra words to wade through.
- **Use non-verbal communication** - Mime, gestures, facial expressions
- **Use visual aids** - Images, video, posters, drawings
- **Check for understanding** - Ask students if things are clear rather than if they understand. Often they will say they understand when they don't out of embarrassment or to save face.
- **Be adaptable** - Students needs change constantly. The ability to adapt your teaching and change your methods, techniques and even the order that you teach things is very important, read essential to successful language teaching.
- **Differentiation** - Modify teaching materials, style and methods for students with learning disabilities or special needs.
- **Positive reinforcement** - Encourage your students with positive comments, rewards or
- **Incorporate technology** - Use computers, smart phones, tablets, internet, social media and AI as tools for teaching, practice and assessment.
- **Maximize student talk** - Give students more opportunities to speak, converse, ask questions, etc.
- **Reduce teacher talk** - Minimize how often you speak. Allow more response time and pauses

Teaching Lower-Level Learners

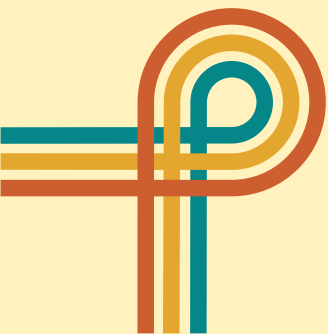


Tips & Best Practices - Speaking/Listening

- **Authentic** - language used by a native speaker to communicate a message - not just for display
- **Real-life** - speaking/listening tasks are real-life occasions to use language e.g. ordering at a restaurant, buying a bus ticket, reserving a hotel, etc.
- **Geared to students' needs** - language learning is always student-centered, meeting the needs of the student. This may mean speaking/listening skills that may not correspond to the learners level
- **Task-based language learning** - learning and teaching based on the skills needed to accomplish specific tasks e.g. to order from Tim Hortons, you need to know how to use modals, understand the names of the menu items, how to express a request, greetings, etc.
- **Conversation starters** - To enable learners to practice speaking/listening skills, use songs, movies, pictures, articles, questions as conversation starters. They will also learn turn taking, how to express an opinion, how to agree and disagree and other necessary conversation skills.

Tips & Best Practices - Reading

- **L1 transfer possible** - Sometimes it is possible for learners to transfer their skills, prior learning and strategies from their L1, first language, to learning English. However, if the lettering system, sentence
- **Direction** - in English reading is done from left to right, top to bottom. This will have to be taught implicitly when it differs from the directionality of a learner's L1
- **Phonics** - teach the sounds of the letters, fusion, blends - borrow activities, strategies from elementary teachers to assist your learners in acquiring the skills to decode words
- **Sight words/high frequency word lists** - Sight words like Dolch or Fry provide the most commonly used words in texts. This will assist students in reading and understanding what they read
- **New Vocabulary** - Introduce no more than 8-10 new vocabulary words per day
- **Word wall** - virtual or physical - can be a standalone wall with useful words or connected to a specific task, theme or as needed.
- **Dictionary** - have a class or personal dictionary where students can list words and their meaning as they learn them.



Teaching Lower-Level Learners

Tips & Best Practices - Writing

- **L1 transfer possible** - Sometimes it is possible for learners to transfer their skills, prior learning and strategies from their L1, first language, to learning English. However, if the lettering system, sentence
- **Direction** - in English reading is done from left to right, top to bottom. This will have to be taught implicitly when it differs from the directionality of a learner's L1
- **Letters/numbers** - teach and practice letters, their sounds and numbers with songs, videos, games - useful for low level learners of different ages.
- **Journal/diary** - traditional, video, audio, virtual - use a journal, diary as a writing tool that can be therapeutic and highly motivational for students - using video, audio or virtual formats allows students to write regardless of their writing skill level.
- **Dictation** - practice listening skills as well as writing skills, including capitalization and punctuation rules.

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