

Building English Language Fluency

Many classroom and instructional approaches are effective for second-language learners (Carey, 1997; Cazden, 1986; Garcia, 1993; Tabors, 1997). The following suggestions synthesize previous research and can apply to all students:

- Allow children to practice following and giving instructions for basic literacy tasks such as turning pages during reading, using pictures to tell a story, telling a story in sequence, and noting the names of main characters in a story.
- Allow for voluntary participation instead of strictly enforced turn taking.
- Have students dictate stories about special personal events.
- Embed instruction in context cues that connect words to objects, visuals, and movements (Carey, 1997; Tabors, 1997).
- Create consistent and predictable routines.
- Use small peer groups to give children opportunities to learn English in non-threatening, secure environments and promote friendships among children who speak different languages (Johns, 1992).
- Teach English-speaking children in the classroom to act as language resources for English Learners.
- Modify the second language so that it is comprehensible for young second-language learners. To make their speech easy to understand, teachers should speak at a standard speech with some pausing between phrases, use simple short sentences with clear referents, and use more gestures, movements, and facial expressions to help convey meaning (Carey, 1997).

Espinosa and Burns. (2002). Early Literacy for Young Children and English-Language Learners. In Howes, C., *Teaching Four - Eight Year Olds* (Reformatted and adapted from pp. 62-64). Brookes Publishing Company