

Designing Remote Learning for English Learners (ELs)

When designing distance learning, consider **Inputs** and **Outputs**.

Inputs are supports and scaffolds to help ELs access the content, task directions, expectations, etc.

Outputs are EL products as they engage in learning tasks (formal and informal assessments).

It is important that lessons, even within remote learning environments, have students practice all language domains (Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing).

INPUT: What can you provide to help beginning ELs understand directions, expectations, texts, and content?

- Listening: Teacher/student created or shared instructional videos or podcasts
- Reading: Online or paper articles, books, texts

Keep it **Simple** and Clear

- Chunked or bulleted text or shorter listening passages/tasks
- Step-by-step directions in basic terms (including how to navigate new technologies)
- Definitions for academic terminology in simple, familiar terms (including technology terminology)
- Leveled reading options for less complexity, e.g. Breaking News in English, Times in Plain English, CommonLit
- Easy access and sign-in processes when using technology

Keep it **Visual**

- Screencast or video of teacher accessing a new resource step by step, e.g., Screencast-o-matic
- Graphics and pictures to accompany text or new terms

Keep it **Familiar**

- Primary language materials and directions* (e.g., for communicating with students and families: Remind/Talking Points/Microsoft Translator. For reading or content: Khan Academy in Spanish, Children's Books Online, Global Story Books)
- Connections to prior learning, lessons, tasks, experiences, identities
- Previously used sites and supports, e.g., audio support/read-alouds via phone, video, or app feature
- Learning buddy system with a classmate or language peer

**Electronic translation and interpretation options are provided to support communicating with families about providing instructional support at home, given these unprecedented circumstances. These often do not provide accurate translations. Please indicate when you are providing information using a translation application to prepare students and families for inevitable misinformation from inaccurate transfer between languages.*

OUTPUT: What can you provide to help students craft verbal and/or written responses?

- Written: On paper and take a picture to send by text/WhatsApp/email, chat features within virtual spaces or Google Docs/Forms
- Spoken: Discussion or breakout groups in virtual, synchronous classes; Short videos of ELs responding to given prompts (e.g., via Flipgrid)

Keep it **Supported***

- Sentence frames
- Model paragraphs and mentor texts
- Sample and model products (via pictures or videos)
- Short checklist or simple rubric for self-assessment or to stay on track

* See [EL Teacher Toolkit](#) for lists of supports and examples.

Keep it **Familiar**

- Primary language responses for beginning level ELs
- Connections to prior learning, lessons, tasks, experiences, identities

- Previously used sites and supports, e.g., audio support/read aloud recordings

Additional Considerations for English as Second Language (ESL)/English Language Development (ELD) lessons:

- Work with ELs to build social, emotional, and communication skills. Help them use this time to craft portraits and resumes that highlight their interests and skills, e.g., ways I learn best, reading topic preferences, etc. Students can give these to their teacher(s) next year.
- Language development in a primary/home language supports language development in English. Share ideas with families of how to incorporate academic thinking activities into daily routines, e.g., describe characters and their conflicts after reading together, explain how or why things happen, share cultural tales and discuss connections.
- Keep in mind that some families may not have easy access to someone who can help interpret assignment directions or that some families may not have primary language literacy and will not be able to access written information in that language.
- Some ELs may not be as familiar with cultural/American references or idiomatic expressions, or their families may be newer to the county and may not yet have materials that other households may, e.g. newspapers/magazines, simple art supplies, etc.
- Recently Arrived ELs should still be provided access to and support with grade-level content. It would not be appropriate for their only source of language instruction and support to come from a single application or site, e.g., DuoLingo.

Technology Tools and Resources for EL Instruction: Key Ideas and Guiding Questions

Adapted from Seidlitz Education

Divisions and schools are responsible for making choices about appropriate and allowable technologies, products, and instructional materials.

Key to Using Technology with ELs	Guiding Question(s)	Productive Features
Authentic Language Use	It is able to promote authentic language use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides compelling input (reading and listening) • Offers compelling reasons to use English • Empowers students to receive and contribute to global funds of knowledge
Funds of Knowledge	Does it connect with students' backgrounds and prior knowledge or include necessary information/supports to build background?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverages students' funds of knowledge (what they already know and know how to do) • Enables peer collaboration for content support • Provides tools for students to acquire necessary background knowledge or understanding of tasks • Connects students with knowledge communities outside of the classroom
Language Development	Does it promote language development for students at all proficiency levels? Which language domains will students be using and practicing (listening, reading, writing, speaking)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts text as needed • Supports tracking print and choral response • Enhances comprehensible input and output • Enables language support during peer interaction
Responsive (Culturally and Linguistically)	It is culturally responsive and sensitive to a variety of student identities? Does it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an space for celebrating a variety of cultures

	provide access for all English proficiency levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors students' knowledge, experiences, and stories • Provides opportunities for multiple perspectives
Student-Centered	Does it facilitate student inquiry and (supported) autonomy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves students towards active discovery • Allows student choice and voice • Involves students in critical and higher level thinking

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