



Supporting children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Information for Teaching Assistants/Peer Mentors

Children & Young People's Services



A Guide for Peer Mentors

Thank-you for volunteering to support EAL pupils in school. Some may also be new to the UK and so may be feeling anxious. This leaflet offers practical suggestions on how you can help EAL pupils to achieve. You have a very important role in that you can raise their confidence and therefore play a significant role in improving progress.

When supporting New Arrivals 1:1

- Liaise with the pupil's teachers beforehand and request any worksheets/ textbooks that are going to be used in the next few lessons. New Arrivals often find core subjects such as English and Science difficult, whereas Maths can be easier as on the whole it is more visual. The largely practical side of subjects such as Art, Drama, Technology and PE are generally less of a problem due to the more visual/kinaesthetic way in which they are taught.
- Start your session with a warm-up activity.

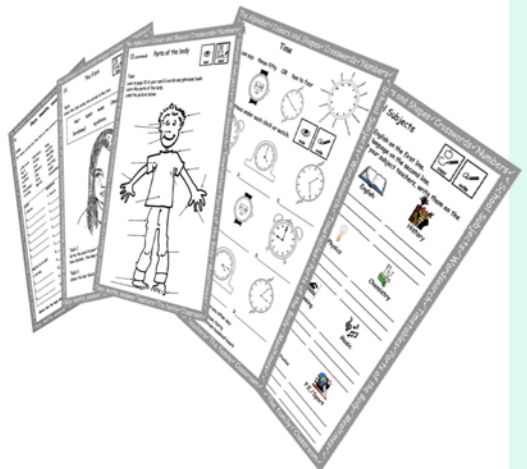
Here are some strategies you may wish to use in order to make the best use of your 1:1 time with an EAL pupil:

- Focus language work around curriculum topics. This way classroom content will not be as difficult for pupils.
- Ask pupils questions on texts to check understanding. Then ask them to write down key facts - correcting major grammatical inaccuracies.
- Make sure the pupil has a bilingual dictionary/ipad and show them how to use it.
- Many topics can be found in a variety of languages at www.wikipedia.org. Pupils can take this home before beginning a new topic in class.

- If materials given by teachers are too complicated, try to find simplified versions in English. Have a look on GCSE Bitesize! Liaise with teachers about this as they may already have such resources, such as those used with less able groups. Base your work on these materials.
- Tippex out key words in texts and write them randomly underneath to create gap-fill activities.

When supporting EAL pupils in class:

- Ideally the pupil should be seated amongst competent and helpful peers where he/she can see/hear the teacher and also the board, real objects and any other visual support. If this is not the case you may like to suggest that the EAL pupil is moved.
- Highlight key words in texts and help the pupil to find them in their bilingual dictionary/ipad. Encourage your pupil to build up a glossary of topic related words either in the back of an exercise book or in a separate vocabulary book.
- Take a small part of the topic or text and try to explain the gist of it using visuals, such as internet pictures and also mime, gesture or demonstration.
- Ask the class teacher if there is an ipad available to use. Wikipedia is useful to look up topics in various languages. Also 'Google translate' can be useful to look up key words. Do not translate whole sentences using Google—as this is not accurate!
- Take care to speak slowly and clearly and to pronounce word endings. Allow time for response and don't worry if a child doesn't say much at first. A 'silent phase' is perfectly normal for a New Arrival.



- If the homework task set for the class is too difficult for your pupil, choose one or two main elements of the topic and set something more achievable. Examples could be: 'Read about Henry VIII in your home language using Wikipedia' followed by 'Write down five words in English which describe Henry VIII,' or 'Draw a diagram of a plant and label it's parts in English'. You may need to discuss this with the teacher first.

We hope you have found this leaflet useful. If you would like any further information, training or resources please contact:

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