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EDU 5201

Diversity Practices

In the U.S. today there is a growing presence of students who speak languages other than English. As a result, many teachers are finding that they have one or many English language learners in their classes. It is our job to help these students successfully learn academic content and skills through English while developing proficiency in English.

My Philosophy: Teachers need a broad range of knowledge and skills to properly support ELL populations; these skills include content knowledge, knowledge of how children learn in a variety of settings, skills for creating a classroom community that is safe in learning for diverse students, knowledge about multiple forms of assessment, and the ability to reflect on his/her own practice. All educators need to view themselves as language teachers. I believe that teachers need to know their students, be aware of students' social and emotional needs, increase their own understanding of first and second language acquisition, and increase their own understanding of ELP.

There are many modifications and strategies that teachers can use to help ELL students access the curriculum. Some that I have found helpful and successful are:

- Use authentic visuals and manipulatives.
- Differentiate your lessons based on the WIDA standards
- Using strategies that match language proficiency
- Giving short, simple directions
- Use partners/small groups to scaffold student
- Give the students assessments that measure their knowledge of content rather than their language skills.

I found the Classroom Modifications PDF to be very straight forward and informative. There were many suggestions I saw that I have never thought of using, but am now excited to try. With my site teacher we are working on ways to improve the “suggested differentiation” section in our lesson manual provided by the district. We both agree that the activities and assessments need a little attention and revision in order to service our students better. We also use manipulatives, visuals and small group work every day for every lesson.