**Newcomer Guide |** ARRIVAL DAY

**GOALS •** Make the student feel welcome.

* Set up a family communication strategy.
* Learn as much as possible about the student’s background   
  and experiences.
* Prepare the student and family for the start of classes.

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| GOAL 1 | **Make the student feel welcome.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Friendly greeting. 2. Immediate access to someone who speaks the student’s native language if possible. 3. Placement paperwork. 4. Provide school information. | | * Smile and good morning, welcoming body language. * Staff member or volunteer who speaks child’s native language. * “Welcome! This is our school” sheet. Student name and information sheet |
| GOAL 2 | **Set up a family communication strategy.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Establish preferred means of contact. (Phone, email, English speaking relative, etc.) | | * “Calling school” card for parents |
| GOAL 3 | **Learn as much as possible about the student’s background and experiences.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Collect information from the family about schooling and literacy. | | * School history/literacy questionnaire |
| GOAL 4 | **Prepare the student and family for the start of classes.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Provide bus/transportation information. 2. Provide lunch account information. 3. Make provisions for the student to have supplies. 4. Inform the student of where to meet contact person when they come to school next. | | * Provide student information sheet * Extra supplies if needed |

**Newcomer Guide |** FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

**GOALS •** Introduce student to building.

* Introduce the student to key adult helpers.
* Introduce student to classroom.
* Introduce student to school procedures.

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| GOAL 1 | **Introduce student to the building.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Contact person meets student at designated location. 2. Walk student to breakfast and teach cafeteria procedures. 3. Show student restroom sign and practice identifying restrooms. | | * Student information card to provide to key staff. |
| GOAL 2 | **Introduce the student to key adult helpers.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Introduce student to key adult helpers (cafeteria worker, classroom teachers, EL teacher, anyone responsible for guiding them to transportation home, etc.) | |  |
| GOAL 3 | **Introduce student to classroom.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Accompany student to classroom. 2. Introduce student to teacher. 3. Introduce student to a pre-identified classroom buddy and ask buddy to help student put away belongings and find seat. | | * Visual schedule for student. * Communication cards for student. |
| GOAL 4 | **Introduce student to school procedures.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Provide and explain visual schedule. 2. Provide basic communication support. 3. Teachers and buddy guide student through the day, referring back to the visual schedule and communication tools as appropriate. Buddy accompanies student to designated transportation at end of day. | |  |

**Newcomer Guide |** SECOND DAY AT SCHOOL

**GOALS •** Introduce student to the building.

* Introduce student to adult helpers.
* Introduce student to classroom(s).
* Introduce student to school procedures.

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| GOAL 1 | **Introduce student to the building.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Student meets contact person at designated location. 2. Student is walked to breakfast and receives assistance as needed with breakfast procedures. 3. Student practices identifying bathrooms. | | * Student information card to provide to key staff. |
| GOAL 2 | **Introduce the student to adult helpers.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Introduce student to other adult helpers. (Nurse, counselor, security, etc. as appropriate.) | |  |
| GOAL 3 | **Introduce student to classroom.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Accompany student to classroom. 2. Practice greeting teacher and buddy. 3. Ask student to put things away and begin procedures. | | * Visual schedule * Basic communication tool |
| GOAL 4 | **Introduce student to school procedures.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Teacher/buddy guide student through day, referring back to visual schedule to reinforce independence. 2. School/classroom procedure instruction, with focus on most essential procedures. (Additional procedures will be added in future days.) | | * Visual schedule * Basic communication tool |

**Newcomer Guide |** THIRD THROUGH FIFTH DAYS AT SCHOOL

**GOALS •** Orient student to expectations.

* Orient student to classroom procedures.
* Orient student to school procedures.
* Explicit instruction of procedures.

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| GOAL 1 | **Orient student to expectations.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Student enters building and goes to breakfast on own. 2. Lunchroom staff support student with meal procedure. | | * Student information card to provide to key staff. |
| GOAL 2 | **Orient student to classroom procedures.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Student goes to classroom and greets teacher/buddy, puts things away, etc. 2. Teacher/peers begin direct instruction of classroom norms and procedures, using student procedure chart. (Adding 2-4 per day.) | | * Visual schedule * Basic communication tool * Student procedure chart |
| GOAL 3 | **Orient student to school procedures.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Accompany student to classroom. 2. Practice greeting teacher and buddy. 3. Ask student to put things away and begin procedures. | | * Visual schedule * Basic communication tool |
| GOAL 4 | **Explicit instruction of procedures.** | |
| STAFF STEPS | | TOOLS |
| 1. Teacher/peers begin direct instruction of school norms and procedures, using student procedure chart. (Adding 2-4 per day.) | | * Visual schedule * Basic communication tool * Student procedure chart |

**SAMPLE STUDENT PROCEDURE CHART**

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| **Activity** | **Procedure Steps** | **Someone showed me how.** | **I can do it now.** |
| Turn in completed homework. | 1. Take homework out of homework folder. 2. Place in red homework basket. 3. Cross name off “homework due” list. | X |  |
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**COLLABORATIVE LEARNING** STRATEGIES

* Vary partners frequently so that students have different language models.
* Use choral readings/responses that allow all students to practice together when answers are short/identical. This can be done when practicing new vocabulary or key facts. This also can be done non-verbally using non-verbal expressions, such as a thumbs up or down to express agreement or disagreement.
* Provide academic language sentence starters and sentence frames to get students going and to help them organize their thoughts in English.
* Frontload vocabulary that students will need to complete the assignment, and provide them with a word bank with visual supports (as needed) for use during the activity.
* Make sure every student in the group has a clear role and responsibilities. Build in accountability to ensure that all students are participating.
* Include a written component to group assignments so that all students demonstrate their understanding and are held accountable.
* Consider kicking off collaborative learning with a quick write where students jot down their initial thoughts about the assignment. This will give EL students an opportunity to organize their thoughts and hone in on key vocabulary before group collaboration begins.
* Provide directions orally and in writing. Check for understanding of directions.
* Create a classroom environment that is supportive and safe, so that students feel more comfortable taking language risks.
* Share your own mistakes with your students so they feel free to make language errors and learn from them.
* Keep groups fairly small (3-4 students) to facilitate more participation.
* Consider including assignment elements where ELs might be particularly successful, including drawings, models, labeling, poetry, songs, short responses, comic strips, etc.

**BUILDING** BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

To learn new information, students need to be able to connect it first with related ideas they already know. This is particularly true for EL students.

To prepare EL students and other students struggling with vocabulary, for a new academic content lesson, teachers should begin by working to understand what they already know about the subject. An emphasis should be placed on introducing key vocabulary.

**TIPS FOR BUILDING** BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

* Begin with open-ended questions and an informal conversation to help understand what students already know about the subject.
* Start with a visual – a photograph, a model, a short video clip or a drawing – that can generate conversation among students.
* Explicitly teach key vocabulary that students will need for the academic content lesson.
* Be sure to model the use of the vocabulary, and to provide students with a written list of the key words and definitions. Use graphics or have students draw pictures to help communicate the meaning of words if possible.
* Develop and maintain vocabulary instruction routines so that students know what to expect. This allows them to focus on new vocabulary content, instead of focusing on understanding procedures.
* Ensure that students are talking about and writing about the new vocabulary and applying it.

**TEN TIPS** FOR ENGLISH LEARNER INSTRUCTION

Remember to give adequate wait time. In some cultures, people naturally give more thinking time before responses than we do in U.S. culture. ELs need more time than the typical native English speaker to organize and express their thoughts. Wait times vary depending on the information being processed, but should typically be several seconds.

 Moderate speech for speed and enunciation, and allow adequate think time so that English Learners have had time to think about and process questions.



Maintain a steady voice level when asked to repeat yourself or to provide additional explanation. Students may interpret teacher’s speaking more loudly as resentment or frustration on your part.



Continue to teach academic content and vocabulary as students are learning basic social language. Social language will be reinforced by peers on the playground, in the hallways, etc., and EL students have the right to access academic content while their English is still developing.



Remember to use photographs, videos, models, gestures, skits and other visual input as appropriate along with the textbook when providing visual aids.



Provide frequent comprehension check-ins with ELs. EL students are often hesitant to ask for assistance. After giving students time to think and get started, check on their progress and provide additional support as needed.



Student’s smiling and nodding their heads may not be an indicator that they fully understand directions or taught concepts. It’s possible they are just being polite!

Encourage students to keep using their native language at home and to read in their native language, while also pushing them to read and speak in English for the most part at school.



Allow students to converse in their native language with an assistant or another student if they need to clarify instructions or the meaning of key vocabulary.



Remember to provide students with ample opportunities to review vocabulary and key concepts. English is learned through repetition. Students are likely adding vocabulary quickly and retention can be challenging.