**20 Double-Duty Strategies**

**Strategies to Support English Language Learners transition to an English-speaking environment and all new students transition into middle school.**

*(Rick Wormeli, 2011)*

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| 1. Speak Clearly
2. Repeat important words and information several times
3. Extend time periods for responding to prompts as necessary
4. Avoid using idioms, colloquialisms, and shorthand references unless you’re going to take time to explain them
5. Point to what you’re referring to
6. Label things in the classroom and hallways, such as “Computer Lab 2” or “stapler”
7. Provide specific models and hand-on experiences
8. Use visuals during instruction, such as pictures, illustrations, graphs, pictographs, and real objects as much as possible
9. Demonstrate what you mean, rather than just describe it.  For example, use a scientific balance when explaining equal values right and left of the equation sign in algebra.  When teaching parallel sentence structure in English, write the model sentences parallel to each other on the display board
10. Make students feel that they belong and have a role to play in classroom learning. Find something in a student’s background that connects to the topic you’re studying and incorporate it into the lesson.  Have students take on leadership positions, and ask them to demonstrate their talents.
11. Use think alouds to model sequences of tasks.
12. Use cooperative learning groups, with more seasons students partnering with less seasoned students
13. Find ways to enable new students who may be tentative about their abilities to demonstrate their intellectual skills and maintain dignity
 | 14. Give students quick and accurate feedback. An English language learner might say in halting English, “this correct paper?” Reply in affirmation, “Yes, that *is* the correct paper. Thank you.” A middle schooler might ask, “Am I doing OK?” Respond, “Yes, you’re doing well, and here’s how I know…”15. Spend time building background knowledge. If you’re about to teach students about magnetic fields, for example, let them play with magnets, pouring iron shavings near the poles to watch their pattern of dispersal or gathering. Before teaching students about irony, orchestrate an ironic happening in the classroom and ask for comments.16. Stay focused on how students are moving toward their own learning goals-not on h0w they’re doing in relation to other students. We do students a disservice when we compare them with their peers or try to motivate them by parading others’ success in front of them. English language learners and middle level students desperately want to be successful.17. Recognize the difference between conversational and academic language and understand that students need help with both. Go out of your way to explain terms like *similar, math, exercise, vocabulary, compare, instead of, not only,* and so on.18. Take the time to learn about students’ interests and cultures. This engenders doo will and enables you to make connections in the curriculum.19. Teach new content through a medium or topics that students already know. In the case of English language learners, this means teaching content in or making connections to their native language whenever possible. In the case of all middle schoolers, it means building on familiar knowledge. |