



## Considerations for English Language Learners (0-5) Making Concepts Meaningful

“...Cultivating a warm, caring atmosphere will allow children to explore and discover their world without fear of punishment or ridicule” (Landry, 2005).

### *Start with What the Child Knows*

- ❖ Use a few words in the child’s home language
  - Ask parents, family members, community volunteers for help with a few key words or phrases and learn how to pronounce the child’s name as accurately as possible.
  
- ❖ Using the family’s home language gives the message that the school values the child’s primary language

### *Start Slowly*

- ❖ Give the child time to familiarize herself with the environment
  - ❖ Respond to a child’s efforts to communicate verbally and nonverbally (even if you are not able to understand what is being said)\*

\*During a child’s early language development the child will use the language she is most comfortable with or not speak at all. As the child acquires language she will increasingly begin to use the new language.

### *Use Repetition*

- ❖ Say the same thing slowly and clearly more than once
  - Repetition allows the child to grasp what is being said
- ❖ Repeating the name for a single object provides opportunities to learn the name of the object
- ❖ Emphasize words by putting them at the end or near end of a sentence\*

\*A child has a better opportunity for understanding what the word means when what you are saying is structured in this manner.

- ❖ Repeat words, sounds, and hand gestures that children use to communicate and wait for a response. Respond when they practice and play with language.

### *Consistent Routines*

- ❖ Helps the child to quickly learn where to go and what to expect
  - ❖ Allows the child to become a participating member of a group
  - ❖ English Language Learners will follow the lead of their English proficient peers\*

\*Routines that allow a child to naturally be drawn into groups provides child with multiple exposures to the new language.

## *Strategically Pair Children*

- ❖ Pair children with helpful peers who can serve as good language and social models
  - Young English Language Learners will sit or play by a peer who accepts the way they communicate and include them in activities

## *Scaffold Communication*

- ❖ Combine what you are saying with a gesture, action, visual cue, or directed gaze
  - Provide as many context clues as possible
    - Ex: Farm theme
      - Talk about farm animals
      - Read books about farm animals
      - Listen to farm animal sounds
      - Provide props

Describe objects, events, interactions, behaviors, and feelings as children experience them during the course of daily routines and other activities. Multiple exposures in discreet periods of time (“time windows”) enhance children’s vocabulary and ability to communicate. \*

- ❖ Take field trip to the farm
- ❖ See, smell, hear sounds of the farm
- ❖ Child may hear the farmer speaking in her home language

\*According to Rovee-Collier, multiple exposures in discreet periods (time windows) connect new vocabulary to concepts.

- ❖ Provide numerous and varied opportunities for children to experience their home language in the care setting (infant or preschool). Volunteers from the community may visit and tell stories, read books, and sing songs in the child’s home language.
- ❖ Converse regularly with families about children’s verbal and nonverbal communication (“What do you think he meant by...”)
- ❖ Ask simple, open-ended questions related to child’s interests and wait for a response.
- ❖ Comment on a child’s focus of interest or activity.
- ❖ Listen and add to topics toddlers initiate, encouraging give-and-take communication.