

These resources can be used with Grades K-5, Grades 6-8, and Grades 9-12. Websites and examples have been reviewed for appropriate use for English language learners and students who have been classified as Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Year 1 and Year 2.

English Language Development Strategies in Social Studies

Pre-teach Reading Assignments

Before students can read the social studies textbook assignment, the teacher models how to use features such as chapter overviews, chapter or lesson objectives, and bolded vocabulary words. Providing vocabulary in advance (with visuals) when possible is helpful. Providing simple outlines of main themes/topic and supporting details may also prove to be beneficial.

Use of Context Clues

An effective strategy to support ELL vocabulary learning in social studies is the clues' proximity to the unknown word. Fluent readers use signal words (such as *or*) found close to the unknown word. Fluent readers also use punctuation clues, such as a comma that separates the unknown word with the rest of the sentence which might contain a definition or synonym. Teach students to look for these indicators. Within context, have the students identify what they know versus what they do not know. Does it look right? Does it make sense? Pay particular attention to the initial, medial and final sounds of word choices.

Sampling of Cloze Activities for Writing (Fill in the blank)

Sentences with pre-determined words missing and a word bank provided for student use to fill in blanks.

A sentence with a pre-determined word missing and only a couple/few words provided for the student to use to fill in the blank.

A Sample Cloze Activity to Use with Reading Text

Sticky notes are used to cover selected words in a sentence which has been written on the board, sentence strips or on the overhead. Sticky notes can be used to cover an entire word or just the onset or rime of a word. Students use context to determine the covered word. They volunteer their ideas and the teacher charts their ideas. If the onset and rime are both covered, the teacher will uncover the sticky note that hides the onset (this may also be done one letter at a time). Words that have been guessed by students that do not match the uncovered onset are crossed out and students continue to make additional guesses. The teacher and students discuss which words make sense in the space and which initially match the onset. The covered word can then be completely revealed.

Website for Cloze Activities

Hot Potatoes is freeware, and you may use it for any purpose or project you like. It is not open-source. The *Hot Potatoes* suite includes six applications, enabling you to create interactive multiple-choice, short-answer, jumbled-sentence, crossword, matching/ordering and gap-fill exercises for the World Wide Web. <http://hotpot.uvic.ca/index.php>.

Word Banks

Word banks are used either as a whole class activity displayed as a word wall, or the teacher models for the students how to keep a personal list of newly learned social studies vocabulary.

Word Bank Ideas

- Word Banks are lists of content-specific vocabulary that are content driven and teacher guided. Each word bank has its own Bank of words and provides an approach to meaningful teaching of vocabulary with an emphasis on student engagement and higher level thinking skills.
- Word Banks can be used for both direct and incidental instruction of core content vocabulary. In order to develop deep understanding of words, students need to see, hear, and use new terms in many contexts.
- Use of individual student word journals

Rehearsal Strategies (Practice)

Rehearsal is frequently used in social studies for verbatim recall of information. The teacher encourages and models the use of flashcards. Other rehearsal strategies include underlining or highlighting of important vocabulary and key concept points in the students' notes.

Teachers should provide as many opportunities as possible for students to use English in the classroom, either with peers or with the teacher. Teachers should structure classroom activities in a way that promotes continuous, active use of English. Classroom tasks should be arranged as to require students to interact linguistically to complete said task. In addition, engaging content creates motivation and a desire to communicate ideas.

Teacher Lecture and Student Note Taking

Effectively support student note taking during lectures by giving struggling students fill-in-the-blank guides or other forms of graphic organizers. During the lecture, the teacher indicates when to fill in the blanks. Further support student note taking by displaying or providing individuals a

bank of key concepts and vocabulary words. Pause frequently to ask and answer questions and to give struggling students time to complete the blanks.

Note Taking Ideas

- Use sequence cards (with or without visuals) with lines provided for note taking
- Use a variety of graphic organizers dependent upon complexity of material presented.
- Data Chart for Note Taking
- Also see “Use of Graphic Organizers”

Role Playing

Role playing can make difficult or abstract social studies concepts more understandable. If the ELL student lacks the language skills to participate in the role play, have them watch and listen as other students play the roles.

Role Playing Ideas

- Students complete a personal diary while the class is studying a particular time period or region.
- What famous person am I? Use this strategy as a review activity at the end of a Theme unit, quarter, Semester or at the end of the year. The purpose of this activity is to review various historical figures studied. A famous person’s name is attached to a card and taped to a student’s back without their reading the card prior to this point. The student is to attempt to identify “who they are” by asking questions of their fellow classmates (who also have a famous person’s name taped to their back). The questions asked should be formulated to enable only a yes or no response. No more than two questions can be asked to the same person. Each student who figures out who he/she is within 20 questions wins the game. The student that correctly guesses the identity on the card by asking the least number of questions would be considered the grand winner.
- Democracy - Why do we need government, what should it do, and what form should it take? Prior to this exercise make sure the students have prior knowledge and understanding of the definitions of necessary vocabulary words such as republic, democracy, anarchy, autocracy, aristocracy, and plutocracy. The class is divided into groups of five. No instruction should be given regarding appointing leaders or recorders. Provide an initial scenario to each group, such as they represent a people where no government exists and that all the groups live on a lone island but are unable to communicate with other groups. How would they set up their existence? How would they manage to survive on the island? Did they name their group? Is everyone “happy?” Have groups share their decisions and the process they used to make them. As time

goes by, provide additional scenarios which would prompt discussions of political parties, philosophies, the necessity of treaties, war, etc,

Primary Source Material and Artifacts

Incorporate primary source materials, artifacts, or realia into the lesson to give ELL students a better understanding of difficult vocabulary, content, and concepts, as well as of historical periods. Photos, models, copies of documents, etc. can be used to enhance student understanding.

Jigsaw Learning

Jigsaw is a cooperative learning technique with components that can be easily modified. The classroom is divided into 5 or 6 person heterogeneous “home” groups representing multiple ability levels. One student from each group is appointed as the leader. Social studies chapters or material to be read is divided and assignments are explained and disbursed among the groups. Students leave their “home” group and meet in another group where other students have an identical assignment. This is known as the “expert” group. The “expert” groups are a mixture of native speakers and ELLs who will work together to understand their section of the assignment. The “experts” then return to their original “home” group to teach their portion of the chapter or assignment and to learn from the other members of their “home” group. Utilizing jigsaw learning in the classroom decreases the occurrence of ELLs becoming overwhelmed with the task of reading and understanding an entire chapter.

A variety of content can be covered using this type of strategic classroom setup. Lesson ideas include a variety of topics, concepts, themes, and issues. They can include short biographies (divide segments/stages of the person’s life amongst the groups) and any war/conflict (short term causes, long term causes, short term effects, long term effects). “Expert” groups can be formed by assigning specific tasks/concepts/questions to one specific group. They, in turn, discuss the main points of their segment and present what they have learned to the rest of the class.

Upon presenting, students are always encouraged to ask questions for either additional information or clarification. Assessments can always be administered upon the completion of all presentations of the jigsaw material.

Use of Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers can be useful for displaying and organizing a wide variety of information. Multiple skill building is also represented when utilizing graphic organizers. The skills include analyzing, brainstorming, comparing and contrasting, evaluating, hypothecations, visualizations, interactions, sequencing processes, events and experiments. They can also show main idea and details, facts, and/or arguments that support it. Graphic organizers help students to focus on a topic, review what they already know, organize their knowledge, and helps to monitor their growing comprehension of a given topic.

Sampling of Graphic Organizers and Their Use

- Herringbone map - Use to prepare for a writing assignment, especially when writing about multiple ideas and attributes
- Flow charts - visually displays a chain of instructions
- Cycle map – Use to show how items are related to one another in a repeating cycle
- Spider map - used to organize thoughts but also used effectively as a note-taking template
- KWHL Charts: What I already **K**now, What I **w**ant to find out, **H**ow I can learn more and What I have **l**earned – Use to organize what a student knows and what is learned about a topic before, during or after the research is done.
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- THC Charts: What I **t**hink, **H**ow I will find out, and What I **c**onclude – Use to organize what a student knows and why they want to learn about a topic before, during or after the research is done.
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- Star Diagram – Uses including include brainstorming, organizing prior knowledge of a specific topic, or describing the who, what, when, where and why of a story.
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- Vocabulary maps - Useful in helping students learn new vocabulary words. The new vocabulary word is written in the center and in each of the four corners, the student can write a variety of information. It could include a definition, a part of speech, a synonym, an antonym, a picture that illustrates the meaning of the word or write a sentence using the word.
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- Fact/Opinion Chart – Two columns – one titled “Fact” and the other titled “Opinion.” Students can listen to teacher statements and then determine which column to place the statement. Students can work in pairs or small groups and generate their own statements and determine whether it is a fact or opinion. Statement can be taken from literature text and used in the same manner.

Buddy Read

One student reads while the other listens or takes notes. The pair then stop reading periodically to discuss and create a graphic organizer to study. This strategy could also be used as a type of Jigsaw Learning.

Analogies

Using analogies will help students link the familiar with the unfamiliar. Find examples within the classroom, school, and community that led to student understanding of social studies concepts. It is important to point out similarities as well as differences.

