

Approaches to supporting EAL students in Homework Clubs

Students accessing support from tutors at homework clubs may come from an 'English as an Additional Language' background. Whilst all students have many support needs in common, such as requiring practice time with new skills and content knowledge, or receiving guidance from an informed adult, students from migrant and refugee backgrounds may need specific support with learning English as a new language, learning about English and how it works as a language, and learning new content areas using English as the language of tuition.

Explore using the following range of approaches to support students with an 'English as an Additional Language' background to have productive learning experiences.

THE APPROACH	DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITY
DEVELOPING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS		
Ability to communicate in the English Language	Learning to communicate in English requires skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening in formal and informal situations with a range of audiences and for a range of purposes. The four English language skills required for communication are referred to as 'macro skills'.	Spend time with student practising all four macro skills. Explore with student the range of informal and formal settings for communication using appropriate Text Types. See 'Using Text Types' for more information. Discuss the different purposes of different text types. Discuss different audiences in communication and how this might impact on what is communicated.
Knowledge of how English works as a language	Using the English Language for meaningful communication requires grammatical and phonological knowledge (i.e. how the language is constructed, what sounds are made etc). Understandings about how English operates in society are also crucial to its effective use.	Explore various grammatical elements such as tenses, sentence structure, using cohesive devices etc. Explore the range of ways English can be used in different social contexts.
Ability to learn new content using English	English is the language of tuition. Learning new content areas across the curriculum requires proficiency in English.	Practice key skills such as questioning and seeking clarification. Explore cultural understandings around cross-curricula content areas.
IDENTIFYING WHAT LANGUAGE SUPPORT STUDENTS NEED		
Informal assessment of language needs	By paying attention to the student's skill level in all four macro skills appropriate support can be targeted.	Chat with the student about what they like to do and where and when they use English. Listen to how the student speaks and what they understand of your conversation. Listen to them read and ask them about the text. Look at the student's writing and their homework. For further explanation see 'Language Needs Assessment Checklist'.

MAKING LEARNING FUN		
Using Games	Involving students in fun activities can extend all four macro English skills in an informal way. When students play games they don't necessarily realise they are also learning and as a result may be more relaxed and receptive to new ideas and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What am I: Using closed (yes/no) questioning, work out who is what. Great for practising classification ("Am I an animal?") - Memory Games: remembering what was on a card or a tray. Great for developing literacy behaviours. -See 'Ideas for Homework Club Activities' for more game ideas.
Using the creative arts	Some students respond well to approaching learning through the creative arts. For kinaesthetic learners using 'doing' activities will engage them well. Other students may respond to the fun that can be had when the arts are used in learning.	Use drama, dance, music and art to explore ideas and extend understanding
WORKING WITH TEXT TYPES		
Text Type knowledge and use	Spoken and written communication can be described in a range of different text types. Different text types serve different functions and have a known structure that can be learnt. See Using Text Types to Support Students in Homework Clubs for more information.	Familiarise yourself with the range of different text types, their structure, purpose and language features. Explore which text types the students you tutor are working with. With your student target one text type and practice elements of its structure such as an Orientation, or a feature of a range of text types (such as the past tense). See Tips for Tutors videos: Reading; Writing for further ways of using Text Types to support students reading and writing.
WORKING AT DIFFERENT TEXT LEVELS		
Text level knowledge and use: Complete Text	Knowledge of Texts can be broken down into five parts: complete text; paragraph; sentence; phrase / clause; word. Focussing on these different levels at different times can support students with their writing, in particular. It is also useful knowledge to assist with reading strategies too.	Student practices identifying different text types, and their constituent parts. Students organise existing but deconstructed texts into their correct parts and order. Students can reproduce these parts in a group or individually.

Text level knowledge and use: Paragraph	Knowledge of Texts can be broken down into five parts: complete text; paragraph; sentence; phrase / clause; word. Focussing on these different levels at different times can support students with their writing, in particular. It is also useful knowledge to assist with reading strategies too.	Student identifies topic sentences in written texts and practices writing them. Student identifies and practises using cohesive devices (linking words) within paragraphs such as 'however', 'then' etc. Student practices writing complete paragraphs containing one main idea.
Text level knowledge and use: Sentence		Student practises writing the four different types of sentences (simple, compound, complex, compound-complex) including practise of Subject Verb agreement, conjunctions and relative pronouns.
Text level knowledge and use: Clause / Phrase		Student explores difference between clauses and phrases. Student practices writing examples of clauses and phrases, including adverbial and adjectival phrases and clauses.
Text level knowledge and use: Word		Student is exposed to and practises retention of new vocabulary (see Tips for Tutors: Vocabulary). Word / vocabulary games are great for fun practice. Student identifies and uses different word classes: verbs; nouns; adjectives; adverbs. Student practises using the definite and indefinite article (The / A). Student practises plurals and tense changes. Student practices using auxiliary verbs, and a range of modal verbs.