**Teaching ELL: General Instructional Strategies**

These strategies are part good thinking and part best practices. They work for ELLs and EO students because they activate prior knowledge, encourage students to work together, and provide sensible foundations for teaching and learning in a classroom setting. They can be realistically integrated into the classroom and provide all learners with opportunities to use the four functions of language in an authentic context.

* Never assume anything! What you think a student does or does not know can greatly affect the success of a lesson or activity. For example, some children may not have had experience with cutting or gluing. A quick demonstration can prevent heartache or a big mess.
* Differentiate instruction and recognize multiple intelligences when designing lessons. Activities should include different kinds of opportunities for individual, paired, and group work, as well as tasks that appeal to a range of learners, like creating charts, drawing, gathering information, and presenting. Differentiating enables your teaching to connect with more of your students.
* Teach thematically whenever possible so that students have multiple opportunities to use the words they are learning in context. See [Word Bank example](http://www2.scholastic.com/content/collateral_resources/pdf/e/powerofwordsbank.pdf) (PDF).
* Provide choices for completing a project.
* Guide and evaluate students’ work with a rubric.
* Draw pictures to explain vocabulary. Have a student volunteer draw the pictures, too, and post them in the classroom or have students draw pictures in notebooks or on a chart.
* Repeat the same lesson or concept in different ways; more exposure to new learning is always better.
* Color code and/or number directions posted in your classroom.
* Repeat vocabulary in a variety of ways through reading, writing, listening, and speaking experiences.
* Infuse activities with higher level thinking skills, such as comparing, evaluating, extrapolating, and synthesizing.