

ESL STRATEGIES FOR THE MIXED CLASSROOM

Academic Support Department
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CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

China:

- Test results focused
- Exalted teacher
- Success correlated with hard work
- Lecture based classes.

US:

- Asking questions
- Critical thinking
- Class participation.
- Group work.



PLAGIARISM

Reasons:

- Shame at underperforming.
- Pressure for increased workload in another language.
- Desire to get good GPA.

Solutions:

- Give overview of school's policy on plagiarism.
- Have students identify plagiarized and non plagiarized works.
- Teach citations and rephrasing.
- Explain that authentic work is more valued than “perfect” work.



BOARD WORK

- Write itinerary on the board.
- Face students when you speak, turn sideways when writing on board to maintain eye contact.
- Have specific place for writing homework on board.
- Use graphic organizers.
- Write templates of what you expect before asking students to produce.
- Provide a vocabulary bank on the board for students to choose from.
- Don't write in cursive.



SPEAKING IN CLASS

- Give students time to prepare a response before calling on them.
- When a student gives an incorrect or unclear response, restate and clarify.
- Model an appropriate response before the student is expected to speak.
- Provide an outline of the subject matter so the students will be able to contribute to group discussion more confidently.
- Give low level students choices of either/or when asked to give a response in class.



READING

- Prior to reading have a discussion about the topic to check their prior knowledge.
- Read the first few lines and have them anticipate what the reading section will be about.
- Stop and summarize in pairs after each paragraph and/or page.
- Read out loud and have students underline all of the words and phrases they don't understand.
- Have them tell you their words after the reading session and explain the vocabulary.
- Find ways to relate the text to themes the student can relate to.



CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

- Low stress atmosphere, highly supportive.
- Structured and organized. If students know what is expected of them, they will function better.
- Establish routines.
- Never assume your students know something, always explain and check understanding.



MODIFYING HOMEWORK, ASSIGNMENTS, TESTS AND QUIZZES

- Cross out some of the repetitive questions.
- Allow students to draw pictures or create diagrams to answer questions to show they know material if they don't have the necessary vocabulary.
- Give a word bank on the test for the students to choose vocabulary from.
- Give students extra time for tests and quizzes, at least a time and a half.
- Allow lower level students to do multiple choice instead of answering an open ended question.
- Give true/false questions to choose from.
- Allow students to use dictionaries and translators that aren't connected to the internet.



WRITING AND RESEARCH

- Review sentence structure, parts of speech and paragraph form.
- Create a hierarchy of expectations for writing assignments, i.e. form will be graded the most heavily, then grammar, then spelling.
- Explain citations and have students practice rephrasing and summarizing sections from the texts to avoid plagiarism in papers.
- Write comments on papers, but more importantly, meet with the students to review your feedback face to face.



SMART PHONES AS TOOLS IN THE CLASSROOM

- Take pictures of the board to check their notes.
- Make audio and video recordings of the lecture.
- Record teacher's speech to model correct pronunciation and record their own speech to emulate correct sounds.
- Use as a translator, dictionary, and thesaurus.
- Use for research for aid with cultural competency.

