

## Tips for Supporting ESL and Generation 1.5 Students

### A. Tools for Increasing Comprehension of Text and Lectures

- 1. Textbook format.** Familiarize students with how to use your textbook, such as Table of Contents, Index, headings, subheadings and other useful components. (See sample activity: Book Components Form)
- 2. Reading Strategies** – explain how to use headings and subheadings as comprehension tools. Generate questions from title, subheadings to answer before, during and after reading. (Predictions, unanswered questions)
- 3. Modeling.** Model for students what they are expected to do or produce, especially for new skills or activities, by explaining and demonstrating the learning actions, sharing your thinking processes aloud, and showing good teacher and student work samples. Modeling promotes learning and motivation, as well as increasing student self-confidence -- they will have a stronger belief that they can accomplish the learning task if they follow steps that were demonstrated. **Don't** just tell students what to do and expect them to do it.
- 4. Annotating – highlighting.** Explain effective highlighting; i.e., adding comments/notes to highlighted areas. Highlighting without comments is generally useless.
- 5. Provide focus questions before reading.** Providing students in advance with questions they will need to answer or areas of importance will allow ESL students to focus their reading on these points. Also, point out reading the questions at the end of a chapter before reading will give them an idea of points to focus on while reading.
- 6. Survival words.** Teach students what words are essential to comprehension of a topic and for purposes of writing and/or talking about it. Generate these lists if time is an issue. [See also: Website - Word Family Framework to note the word forms before as well as collocations <http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/wff/index.html>]
- 7. SPUNKI** – a tool to promote student interaction with a text. Also helps instructor in determining “puzzling” aspects of a text. This form also ensures students return to a text after reading it to complete it. The more diverse activities you provide related to a text increases student engagement with the text. (Teach types of questions – right there versus outside the text)
- 8. During Lectures:**
  - a. Emphasize key points.** Stressing key words, writing on the board, repeating yourself with emphasis, etc.
  - b. Use visuals.** Graphs, charts, diagrams, images can all support students’ comprehension of the lecture.
  - c. Write down critical vocabulary.** This is especially helpful for names students need for future reference. (Also see survival words above)
  - d. Post lecture notes.** Make notes available on the class website. Students can compare and revise their own notes for accuracy
  - e. Clarify distinct American cultural references;** e.g. references to American history, film, idiomatic expressions

### B. Writing Assignments/Performance

- 1. Provide detailed assignments with clear expectations.** Some students have never written a paper in the American style. Some educational cultures value long, meandering introductions. Others value placing the thesis in the conclusion. Others value having only an implicit thesis. Generally, students will write the way they’ve been taught to write. If you have particular expectations, help students by being specific and clear.
- 2. Provide examples.** Share successful papers if possible, and explain what made them successful. Being guided through examples will help them produce what you’re hoping for. (See **A.3. Modeling, above**).

- 3. Discuss your students' ideas.** Guide students before they begin to write and at various points in the writing process. Help them focus the topic and stay on track. Allow some class time for students to work on writing assignments in class with you there to answer questions and monitor progress.
- 4. Require a draft.** Work on initial drafts during class to address uncertainty with assignment and ensure students are on course. Also, seeing one or more drafts allows you to provide feedback and direction at the intermediate stage.
- 5. Respond thoughtfully.** Respond to the content with specific suggestions for improvement (not generic comments like “awkward” or “clarify.” Conferencing works best and allows you to ensure students understand your expectations. Ask students to restate your suggestions to ensure they understand. Set up conferencing appointments.
- 6. Expect written errors.** You may notice quite a few insignificant errors, like a missing “the” or the wrong preposition or an unnaturally worded expression. Try to ignore these, just as you would ignore a speaker’s accent as you focused on the ideas they were expressing.
  - a. Insert articles and correct prepositions and idioms.
  - b. Use correction symbols for other types of errors. Will save you time and requires students to analyze mistake thus promoting his/her English language acquisition.
- 7. Correct serious errors.** If there are errors that really and significantly interfere with your understanding of the sentence, help the student by identifying them. You can write one or two possible corrections. You can identify the error and let the student generate the corrections that they can check with you later. You can ask the student to say more about that idea and help find the correct expression. Verbs are errors that need addressing. Use correction symbols to help.
- 8. Teach citation very carefully.** Many international students have been taught to reproduce well-respected texts verbatim, with no citation. These texts were easily recognizable to educated readers, and the skillful writer could weave them into their own work. The American emphasis on intellectual property is truly a foreign concept for many students. In most cases, they do not want to violate our sense of academic integrity, but they genuinely do not know how to incorporate sources skillfully with citations. Help them develop this skill with feedback during the drafting stage.

## C. Class Participation

- 1. Create a Community of Learners.** Try to do activities that promote students working with one another so they are less “nervous” about participating. The more focus you give to ensuring students know one another **at the beginning of the semester**, the more responsive and participatory ESL students will be in class and/or group activities. (See attached: Activity Log)
- 2. Post discussion questions or topics in advance.** This allows students to consider and formulate initial contributions to group discussions.
- 3. Ask questions clearly.** Speak in a way that students can understand. Try to avoid the stereotypical “foreigner talk”—excessively slow and loud speech. Just be aware that it can be difficult to understand rapid, idiomatic speech. Slow down a little and try to avoid slang.
- 4. Mode of speaking and wait time.** Speak slowly and clearly, and provide students with enough time to formulate their responses, whether in speaking or in writing. Remember, they are thinking and producing in two or more languages! After asking a question, wait for a few seconds before calling on someone to respond. This “wait time” provides all students with an opportunity to think and process, and especially gives English language learners (ELL)
- 5. Be understanding.** Some students will be very self-conscious about their imperfect English. They may be frustrated by not being able to freely articulate their complex thoughts. They may be concerned that their native-English speaking peers will think they’re less intelligent if they don’t speak perfect English.
- 6. Be supportive.** Provide a word here and there if you can see the student is groping for a particular expression. If the response is slightly off, try to do something positive with it. You might rephrase the response if it’s just a bit ungrammatical. You might ask clarifying questions. You might elaborate on their response. In any case, your positive reaction is positive reinforcement of their participation.

**7. Institute “Fess Up” in your class.** This practice is effective for classes using group work. Ask students to “fess up” to having done the homework. Those who did not complete the homework form a group to work together. Those who did the homework are then assigned to groups. It is important not to use this as an exercise of humiliation. Explain that group work is more efficient when all members are prepared. This practice focuses then on advancing prepared students while still ensuring students who weren’t prepared do the assignment in part as well. Promotes accountability and being prepared.

## **E. Office Hours**

**1. Encourage and set specific appointments.** In many cultures, students who ask questions of their professors are considered lazy or under-qualified. In these cultures, students are expected to study hard—on their own—until they understand the material. Do make open invitations, but set specific appointments as well so students have a chance to get comfortable with the more American process of approaching professors with questions.

**2. Learn about your students.** Get to know their characteristics, backgrounds, goals, and processes as learners. Learn about them so you can help them identify challenges and resources more efficiently. Write a letter of introduction as first assignment for example.

**3. Ask students to explain concepts.** Avoid asking “Do you understand?” or “Is that clear?” It’s natural to smile and nod when you don’t understand. By asking students to explain their understanding of things, you can target precisely where they need more help.

**4. Be understanding.** Some students will be very self-conscious about their imperfect English. They may be frustrated by not being able to freely articulate their complex thoughts. They may be concerned that their native-English speaking peers will think they’re less intelligent if they don’t speak perfect English.

## **F. Support services on campus**

**1.** Let students know where they can go to get extra assistance with homework and their reading and writing.

a. **Research** – set up class sessions with librarians to teach students research tools available and how to use them.

b. **WLDC (Writing and Language Development Center)** – seek assistance of a tutor for help in writing and reading.

c. **CSC (College Success Center)** – seek assistance of a tutor for help in math, reading of content topics outside English.

d. **HMC (Hard Math Café)** – math assistance

**2. Kurzweil** – This is a program that allows students to scan a text or a writing assignment and have it read to them as they view it. This is a very useful proofreading tool, especially for Generation 1.5.

Kurzweil is located in WLDC and ESL lab. It is also useful as a reading aid for all students.

**3. Weak English Grammar/Writing:** If student writing appears very weak grammatically, encourage students to enroll in **40A**, which is a transferable course and covers all 12 tenses in a semester. Also, **116A** and **116B** are the upper levels of ESL writing and reading which could benefit weaker students to get their English reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar skills improved.

## **G. Test Performance**

**1. Provide a study guide** to help focus their review.

**2. Arrange or facilitate a review session**, particularly for major exams. (Set up and encourage study groups).

**3. Provide extra time on tests, only if possible**, to gain a more reliable measure of student learning. Language and sentence structures used on multiple choice tests are often deliberately challenging. They

require students to discern subtle differences in language in order to select the correct answer, something native speakers will naturally do with greater speed and facility than non-native speakers, independent of content knowledge.

Research summarized by Grabe (2009) has demonstrated that even **fluent** non-native speakers read **50-70% slower** in their foreign language than in their native language.

Writing in a foreign language is similarly slow because of the extra layer of cognitive processing required to produce well-developed, coherent texts in a foreign language.

In the interest of gaining a more reliable measure of student learning, providing extended time for assessment to ESL students has been recognized as a reasonable practice by several universities and professional credentialing boards. Reasonable accommodation is determined locally, but ranges between 25% and 50% extended time.

**H. Get involved in Reading Apprenticeship or a Faculty Inquiry Group** to share out best practices as well as learn effective techniques for teaching students effective reading skills. (Talk to Kiara Koenig and Shawn Frederking)

Attached forms:

1. Letter of Introduction Assignment
2. Activity Log
3. Book Components
4. SPUNKI
5. Vocabulary graphic organizer (use with survival words)
6. Correction Symbols
7. Website - Word Family Framework to note the word forms before as well as collocations

<http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/wff/index.html>

## Letter of Introduction Assignment

### Instructor: Professor Hulin (or Francesca)

**Directions:** Please write a letter of introduction to me. That is, tell me about yourself. I would like to know at least the following, but you may share any other information about yourself that you would like me to know.

1. Your name, or what you would like to be called (a nickname).
2. Your (a) age, if you want, (b) ethnicity, (c) where you are from, (d) where you live now
3. How long you have been studying English and where.
4. About your family (e.g., (1) how many brothers, sisters and children; (2) are you married/single?)
5. Your hobbies and outside school activities
6. Favorite readings, such as books, magazines, newspapers.
7. Are you working? Where? How many hours a week?
8. What are your career goals?
9. What do you want to learn from this class?
10. Any other information that you consider important or would like to share about yourself.
11. What do you consider your strengths as a student?
12. What do you consider your weaknesses or areas to improve as a student?
13. Any questions you have about this class or my method of teaching?

### Format:

#### A. Letters begin with a greeting/salutation:

Dear Ms. Hulin:  
Dear Francesca,  
Dear Professor Hulin:

#### B. Letters end with a closing:

Sincerely,

Your name

### Partner and/or Group Activities Log Sheet

Directions: For each partner and/or group activity we do in class, please indicate who you worked with. Your goal is to work at least once with every member of our class community.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name/Type of Activity</b>	<b>Names of Partner/Group Members</b>
<i>Example</i> 8/17/15	Puzzle	Joan, Maria, Tom, Suki



## Book Components

1. What is the title of your textbook?
2. What edition is this textbook?
3. Who is/are the authors?
4. Who is the publisher of this book?
5. Where can you find the answers to questions 1-4 above? (List all places this information appears).
6. What year(s) was this book published?
7. What does the word copyright mean? Look it up in your dictionary and write the definition below.
8. What is the ISBN number of this book?
9. Looking in the Table of Contents, what is the title of Unit 7?
  - a. What is the title of the first reading? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Who is the author of the first reading? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What page does Unit 10 begin?
11. What is similar about each unit title?
  - a. What does this tell us about the content of each article?
12. Turn to page \_\_\_\_\_. Give an example of:
  - a. Chapter Title
  - b. Heading
  - c. Subheading



## **SPUNKI**

**Instructions:** Using this form as a guide, answer the following: “What part or parts of the reading did you find surprising? puzzling? useful? new? knew it already? interesting?” Explain your responses on the form below. Be prepared to discuss and/or hand them in.  
**The format to answer is: I was surprised that... OR It was surprising that...**

**Surprising**

**Puzzling**

**Useful**

**New**

**Knew It Already**

**Interesting**

Word	Context (the sentence in the reading)	Part of Speech	Dictionary form
<b>Definition:</b>			
<i>Example:</i>			
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## Correction Symbols

**sp** = spelling mistake/error

**Example:** <sup>sp</sup> Nowdays, he likes <sup>sp</sup> lose clothing. **Correct:** Nowadays, he likes loose clothing.

**/** = (a) make a lowercase/small letter **OR** (b) delete word(s)

**a. Example:** Layle went to the Store **Correct:** Layle went to the store.

**b. Example:** He was arrived on time. **Correct:** He arrived on time.

**=** under a letter = make the letter uppercase/capital

**Example:** Yolanda lives on elm street. **Correct:** Yolanda lives on Elm Street.

**ro** = run-on sentence

**Example:** <sup>ro</sup> He graduated then he went to Chico State to get his Bachelors degree.  
**Correct:** He graduated. Then he went to Chico State to get his Bachelors degree.

**cs** = commas splice

**Example:** <sup>cs</sup> He graduated from Yuba College, then he went to Chico State to get his Bachelors degree.  
**Correct:** He graduated from Yuba College. Then he went to Chico State to get his Bachelors degree.

**frag** = fragment/incomplete sentence

**Example:** <sup>frag</sup> Because he lost his cellphone.  
**Correct:** Vang couldn't call his friends because he lost his cellphone.  
**or**  
Because he lost his cellphone, Vang couldn't call his friends.

 = reverse word order.

**Example:** She explained <sup>wavy</sup> to me the rules.  
**Correct:** She explained the rules to me.

**^** = insert something

**Example:** Vincent <sup>^</sup> an I-phone.  
**Correct:** Vincent bought an I-phone.

**art.** = insert article

**Example:** He bought <sup>art.</sup> car.  
**Correct:** He bought <sup>^</sup> a car.

**pl. = plural**

**Example:** Zimfira saw three lion. *pl.*  
**Correct:** Zimfira saw three lions

**sing. = singular**

**Example:** Elena bought her daughter a backpacks for school. *sing.*  
**Correct:** Elena bought her daughter a backpack for school.

**poss = possessive form**

**Example:** Gurpreet found Rosuras book in her backpack. *poss.*  
**Correct:** Gurpreet found Rosura's book in her backpack.

**prep = preposition error**

**Example:** Uyen is taking classes in Yuba College. *prep*  
**Correct:** Uyen is taking classes at Yuba College.

**vf = verb form is incorrect**

**Example:** Harpreet going to visit her mom today. *vf*  
**Correct:** Harpreet is going to see her mom today.

**vt = verb tense is incorrect**

**Example:** Bernardo works at Walmart since 1987. *vt*  
**Correct:** Bernardo has worked at Walmart since 1987.

**wf = word form is incorrect**

**Example:** Mohammad ran quick and won the race.. *wf*  
**Correct:** Mohammad ran quickly and won the race.

**ww = wrong word**

**Example:** Fatima ordered her favorite plate at the restaurant. *ww*  
**Correct:** Fatima ordered her favorite dish at the restaurant.

**sva = subject-verb agreement**

**Example:** Shawn sing in the shower everyday. *sva*  
**Correct:** Shawn sings in the shower everyday.

**# - insert a space**

**Example:** December 31,2017. *#*  
**Correct:** December 31, 2017

 = change phrase/words to the above

**Example:** Nowadays, growing up children is too expensive. *raising*  
**Correct:** Nowadays, raising children is too expensive.

