|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ESL/Special Education Strategies** | |
| 1. **Classroom Newsletter** | Description of Strategy: ESL learners work together with other classmates to develop a monthly classroom newsletter. Creating a class newsletter can be an excellent way for English language learners to develop their language skills. They build vocabulary through writing and through interacting with others in the class. |
|  | * How to Use: Have students create a list of topics that they find interesting and wish to write about in their newsletter. Allow students to work in collaborative groups. Assign students roles, for example "writer," "editor," "researcher," or "graphic artist." Encourage students to include articles in their primary language. Let students share their newsletter with other classrooms and with family members. |
| When to Use: 1) To promote collaboration amongst ESL students and their classmates. 2) To increase the confidence in self expression for ESL learners in the classroom. 3) Allows students in the classroom an opportunity to become familiar with interests of other cultures/backgrounds. 4) To further develop creative writing skills for ESL learners. 5) To expose ESL learners to new skill sets that they may not have used previously (both technologically and socially). |
| Variations of the Strategy: The teacher can provide suggested hot topics to write about each month. ESL learners can rotate their roles (writer, editor, etc.) periodically, to maximize the skills that are learned. |
| 1. **Generating Questions: Using Critical Thinking Skills** | Description of Strategy:  ESL learners work together to generate thought-provoking questions about an assigned reading passage. |
|  | * How to Use: Teachers can begin this process by pre-teaching vocabulary and helping students build background knowledge prior to reading. In lower grades, the teacher should present this lesson as a whole group activity. * Ensure ELLs receive a list of any challenging vocabulary words they might encounter. It's a good idea to provide an explanation and the meaning for each word before they begin to read the story. |
| When to Use: 1) To better develop the student’s critical thinking skills when reading passages. 2) When ESL learners study different genres of writing, like poetry or short stories. 3) To strengthen the point of reference the ESL learner has when reading new material (broaden the perspective for the student). 4) To expand upon the student’s knowledge of vocabulary and writing styles. 5) To promote higher level thinking as additional language skills are gained. |
| Variations of Strategy: Group students together (ESL learners and non-ESL learners) to critically analyze a passage together. Pair ESL students up and have one student come up with a critical thinking question about a passage, and one student to develop an alternate outcome. |
| 1. **Visual Thinking Strategies for Improved Comprehension** | Description of Strategy: The Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) method is a simple activity designed to build an ESL learner’s background knowledge and develop thinking skills that use detail to enhance understanding. |
|  | How to Use: The teacher selects an interesting picture or painting, one that relates to the topic of the story to be read, in this case the picture above. A copy of this picture is placed on the overhead projector. The students are asked, "Please look at the picture silently for a minute and think about what you see. What's going on in the picture?" When a student offers a qualitative statement, the teacher asks for more information. "You said the picture looks old. What makes you say that?" The teacher summarizes what the students said. "So, after looking at this picture we think that, maybe relatives — who lived a long time ago. We can tell this because of what they are wearing and because the picture is black and white." This strategy helps to build the ESL learners background knowledge of a subject and improves inferential skills. |
| When to Use: 1) When reading a new style of literature for the first time – this exercise will help the ESL learner to develop helpful background information. 2) To help ESL learners to understand context clues and how they are helpful when reading/writing. 3) Can be used as a brainstorming activity when learning new material. 4) To promote free thinking/sharing about an unfamiliar topic. 5) To better understand the thought processes and viewpoints of other students, from an inferential perspective. |
| Variations of the Strategy: Teacher can nominate student to bring in interesting image that they are not already familiar with, and the class can each provide one adjective to describe about what they think the photographer is trying to convey. Instead of writing a short passage or story about an unknown image, ESL learners can work together to create short song about the meaning of the image. |
| 1. **Anxiety Management** | Description of Strategy: This instructional strategy helps to better prepare a student with Anxiety disorder and/or Obsessive Compulsive disorder to thrive an learn in a school environment. |
|  | How to Use: If the student is exhibiting anxiety symptoms in the classroom, start by asking how the student is feeling. Be sure to set expectations throughout the day and adhere to a schedule. Create a go to space as needed when student needs to calm down. Observe the student throughout the day and get thumbs up or thumbs down about how the student is feeling. Provide choices to student during anxious moments and provide stress fidget to help calm the student, as well. Teach deep breathing techniques to help student self solve during an anxiety attack. Provide visual timers for breaks and transition times. |
| When to Use: 1) Techniques can be used when the SPED student is trying something new for the first time. 2) To be used when the student is participating in activities with new groups of students/educators. 3) Can be used during events that may spark increased anxiety during the day. 4) When the student displays excessive anxiety about an upcoming school or personal event. |
| Variations of the Strategy: Students with an anxiety disorder are typically not welcoming to changes in the routines; however, the teacher can help to build resiliency and flexibility by building space during the day to work in new small challenges. A school “buddy can be assigned to meet with the student on a weekly basis discuss current events. |
| 1. **Small Group Learning** | Description of Strategy: Students would be grouped together according to similar skill levels and objectives along their education pathway. |
|  | How to Use: Place students in small groups (2-3 per group) based on knowledge/competency of math topic that is being discussed. This will allow students to continue to learn and build on their current skill sets. Provide appropriate learner level content to each group.  When to Use Strategy: 1) When there is a broad range of educational skill sets in the class. 2) To strengthen social interaction skills. 3) To increase cooperation and teamwork skills. 4) When reviewing material for an assessment. 5) When presenting introduction to new topic. |
| Variations of the Strategy: Pair different learner groups together (regardless of content) to promote interpersonal skills and class unity amongst the class. Teach general concepts to larger group, and provide enrichment activities as appropriate. |
| 1. **Role Playing** | Description of Strategy: This strategy is used to teach SPED students with anger control issues to role play possible outcomes (good and bad) to a situation, before it actually arises. |
|  | How to Use: Pair students up (if appropriate in room) or teacher can work directly with student. Provide situation cards to student and have him draw the first card and read the situation. Student and partner (or teacher) will act out possible scenarios, and then discuss the best action to take, given the situation. Student will then draw the next card, and start the next role playing exercise. Complete 1-3 scenarios. |
| When to Use: 1) This strategy should be reinforced as often as possible for students with anger management issues. 2) Can also be used with mixed groups to teach new approaches to problem solving. 3) Though not optimal, can be used after an incident takes place to model proper responses. 4) Can be used to model appropriate positive behavior, as well. 5) Can be used to help student identify and discuss consequences (positive and negative) of certain behaviors. |
| Variations of the Strategy: If appropriate, teacher can create larger groups for additional role play exercises. This strategy can also be completed by using writing prompts, instead of acting the scenario out. |

References

Bright Ideas for Teaching ELLs. (2015, September 15). Retrieved from https://www.colorincolorado.org/teaching-ells/ell-strategies-best-practices/bright-ideas-teaching-ells