

# EAL WRITING STRATEGIES IN A PRIMARY SETTING

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Supporting EAL learners writing will depend on the proficiency of the learner. It is important that teachers consider the language proficiency of EAL learners before considering effective strategies to support writing.

Oxford High Frequency Words			
and	you	house	came
the	so	saw	dog
I	there	time	school
a	got	home	out

Letter Sounds					
a	b	c	d	e	f
j	k	l	m	n	o
s	t	u	v	w	x

Copy the alphabet

a b c d e f

Write about the picture

bag backpack football boy bus stop girl school

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Collect and analyse evidence and data that informs of the nature of the student grouping or the cohort

Use this evidence and data to:

- Identify the instructional groups in the class
- Organise the environment so that it is conducive to learning
- Plan for all learners to achieve growth, irrespective of their point of entry
- Ensure that evidence and data has informed what 'achievable' learning can take place

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When planning what EAL students need to achieve, the teacher:

- prioritises content and language outcomes
- determines an end goal that contains both content and language outcomes, for example, at the end of the TLC, the students will be able to write an explanation about how a hot air balloon works/ an information report about kangaroos
- identifies the language (texts, structures and vocabulary) that students will need to use in order to effectively demonstrate the learning outcomes
- analyses the language and literacy demands of the unit, for example, understanding similes/ use of passive voice

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In considering what EAL students bring to their learning, the teacher:

- identifies the students' existing knowledge, experiences, potential gaps in content and English knowledge and skills
- considers the range of multilingual repertoires amongst the group of students and how they can be used to build knowledge of language and content
- considers how to utilise the range of perspectives and experiences students bring to the topic
- considers how home languages can be used to enhance specific learning or outcomes, for example to access content or facilitate group interactions.

## WRITING SKILLS

Students need to learn writing skills at the levels of sub-word, word, phrase, sentence, paragraph and text. These include:

- forming letters and writing from left to right
- understanding the connection between letters and sounds
- spelling words using a range of strategies
- using grammar to create comprehensible sentences
- connecting sentences to create coherent paragraphs and texts
- choosing language features and text structures to achieve a specific purpose with a particular audience
- applying writing skills for increasingly technical topics and formal contexts.

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## Activating prior knowledge

- Students understand and remember learning better if it is related to their prior knowledge of the content and of the vocabulary and grammar.
- Teachers help by presenting key words with visuals and definitions on the whiteboard before the lesson begins and give learners time to read and write the words and then refer to their list during the lesson.
- Students' first language and cultural backgrounds are considered and explicit links including translations and comparisons with the students' languages, countries and cultures are made (Plurilingualism).



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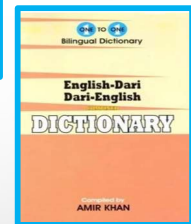
**Plurilingual strategies** are any activities that bring students languages into the classroom to enhance teaching and learning.

Some examples are

- encourage students to use bilingual dictionaries and to look for similarities and differences in the language(s) they know and the language they are learning
- encourage the students to use their home language(s) at certain times during the lesson

MEAs (Multicultural Education Aides) support EAL students in their learning by explaining concepts or instructions in the learners' first or other language/s.

Google  
google translate

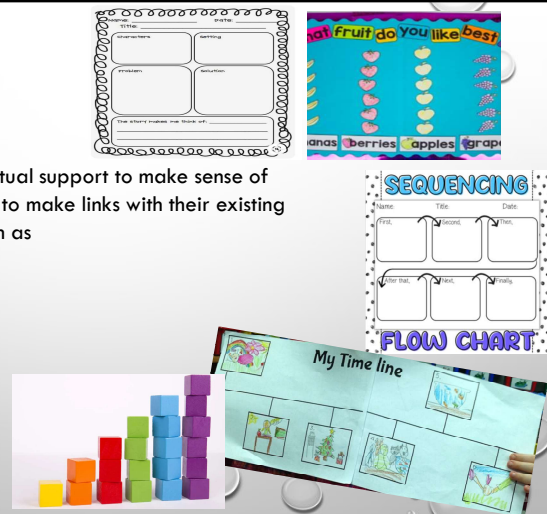


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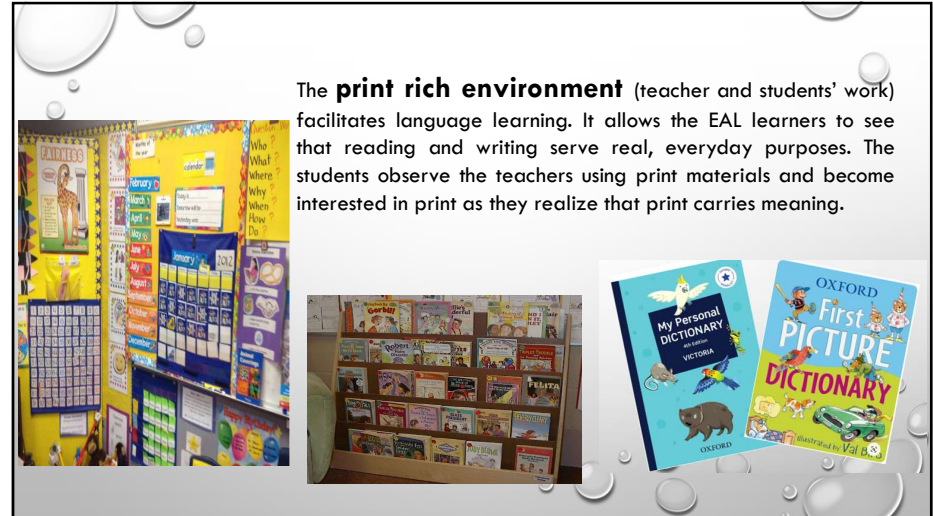
## Visual Support

EAL learners need additional contextual support to make sense of new language and information, and to make links with their existing knowledge. Visual cues are vital such as

- photographs
- diagrams, graphic organisers
- tables and grids
- graphs, charts and pictograms
- timelines
- flow charts
- graphic organisers for writing
- videos



The **print rich environment** (teacher and students' work) facilitates language learning. It allows the EAL learners to see that reading and writing serve real, everyday purposes. The students observe the teachers using print materials and become interested in print as they realize that print carries meaning.

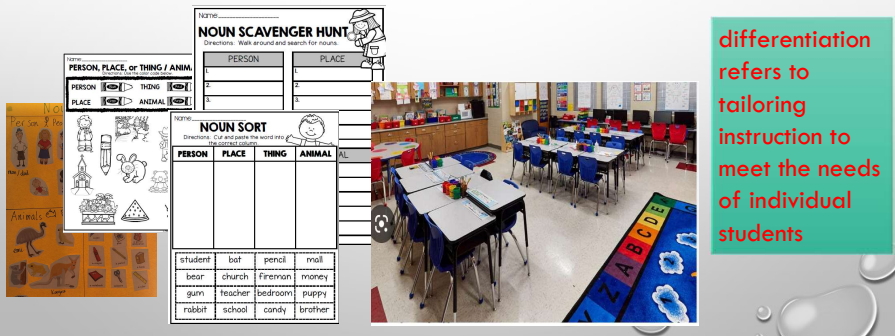


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## Differentiation

Teachers can differentiate content, process, products, or the learning environment in order to create the best learning experience possible for every student in the classroom.



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## An example of differentiation with a labelling activity using a picture stimulus

Low		High	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher models the writing of the label and student copies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student tells the phrase to be used and the teacher writes on the label</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>scribbling or drawing will be accepted</li> <li>approximate spelling is encouraged</li> <li>a 'have a go' attitude is cultivated</li> <li>the child is encouraged to write simple words and phrases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guided writing : Children write the phrases in pairs or groups</li> <li>Independent writing: Children write sentences instead of phrases and/ or elaborate on existing sentences</li> <li>Add conjunctions</li> <li>Write connecting sentences for 2 pictures</li> </ul>



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**Trace The Words!**

Bad Bad Bad Bad Bad Bad  
ball ball ball ball ball  
Band Band Band Band Band  
burn burn burn burn burn  
Beach Beach Beach Beach Beach

**Sentence Writing**

Directions: Write each sentence correctly. Make sure to use a capital letter, finger spaces, and punctuation.

1. I like my red bike.

2. Can you come over?

3. The dog was barking.

**EXpressing AN OPINION**

- I feel / believe that...
- In my opinion...
- It seems to me that...
- Based on my experience, I feel that...

**Sentence Starters Primary Print**

I want  
This is  
On the holidays  
Tomorrow  
I am  
I can  
I went  
One day

40 sentence starters for display PLUS A4 individual mats Colour and black & white

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**Scaffolding** refers to the support given to a student to achieve within their zone of proximal development (ZPD by Vygotsky) with gradual release of that support.

scaffolding involves breaking up learning into parts so that students can gradually tackle more complex materials

repeat recycle reuse

- Teacher modelling, through the use of the narrative framework (title, setting, problem, resolution), or by using a story bag to act as a further stimulus.
- Sentence expansion using a picture (cats) and teacher modelling – Teacher describes, “big cats”, “furry cats”, and “pet cats”. The teacher then suggests two or three things that dogs do, for example, “big cat purrs”, “furry cats scratch” and “pet cats lick”.
- Teacher prompting and waiting time
- Tapping on prior knowledge
- Using visuals
- Mind maps, graphic organizers and anchor charts
- Pre-teaching vocabulary

**To write a recount**

What is your recount about?

Complete the sentences to complete your recount.

First

After that

Following that

Next

Finally

What happened?

How did you feel?

What did you learn?

**elements of FICTION**

Characters

Setting

Problem

Solution

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**Learning Goal:** write a recount of something that happened

**Success Criteria:**

- write a recap
- tell what happened
- use sequence (first, then, next)
- tell about who, when, why
- tell how, what I felt

**Explicit Teaching**

The teacher decides on a learning intention for a class and sets specific, transparent success criteria. These criteria are shared with students and explained in detail.

The teacher periodically checks for student understanding. At the end of a lesson, a teacher will revisit what was covered to summarise understanding and learnings.

The teacher clearly shows students what to do and how to do it through physical demonstration.

**Our Trip to the Melbourne Aquarium**

1st March 2017  
Thursday  
Ages 3-11, 10:00-12:00

**First we saw a lobster.**

**content writing rubric**

Topic of writing is clear	Meaning	Form	Style	Organisation
Student stays on topic	1	2	3	4
Student uses interesting details	1	2	3	4
Student "shows" reader using descriptive details (the reader can picture what is happening)	1	2	3	4
Student uses interesting words and ideas personally	1	2	3	4
It is easy for the reader to read	1	2	3	4

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As I entered the Grade 4 classroom on a Monday, I realised it's a highly organized and inviting environment to be part of. There was print around the room, such as charts, drawings and enlarged pictures, class rules, literacy groups, numeracy groups, star chart, KWL chart, modelled texts, etc.

The teacher called the students to the large colourful mat and the students formed a nice neat circle. I looked around the room and noticed that the children had all the tools they would need for writing. There were different types of paper they can choose from, different writing scaffolds, student's writing books, high frequency word lists, alphabet cards, weekend writing cards with sentence stems, dictionaries, etc.. These were all organised at a corner and the students knew exactly where to get them. No time wasted here!

The teacher brought the students' attention to the white board where the learning intention and success criteria were clearly written (weekend writing task). The teacher got a few students to talk about their weekend and wrote some of the key words on the IWB. Then she told the group leaders to get ready the materials for their members. One group stayed with the teacher on the mat. 2 other groups started to work at their tables with their set of resources. It seemed to me that they had been taught the routine!

**Yay! I got my pen licence!**

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All students need **routines**, especially EAL students. They need to be part of an inclusive learning environment and have a sense of belonging in order to achieve success in their learning.

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### References:

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