

The CALLA Approach

The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is a five-step systematic instructional model to teach ELLs how to use learning strategies for both language and content. The goal of this five-step model is to help students become independent learners, who can evaluate and reflect on their own learning.

The 5 steps are:

1. **Preparation:** In this phase teachers concentrate on specific student information:
 - o The student's prior knowledge about the content topic
 - o The student's current level of language proficiency
 - o The student's types of learning strategies used for similar tasks
2. **Presentation:** The teacher uses various strategies to make new content comprehensible for ELLs, such as:
 - o Demonstrations
 - o Modeling
 - o Visual support [e.g. use of the chalkboard, manipulatives, picture files, graphic organizers, realia, etc.]
3. **Practice:** Students work with the new content information and practice learning strategies that have been taught during the presentation phase. It should be noted here that both presentation and practice occur simultaneously as the student learns to "manipulate" content. Some practice activities might include:
 - o Collaboration [e.g. working in pairs, triads, and cooperative groups]
 - o Problem-solving
 - o Inquiry or research [e.g. looking for answers in text, exploring and expanding on new information, etc.]
4. **Evaluation:** The student, through the use of reflection [e.g. reflective journal] or self-assessment tool [e.g. checklist] judges the success of his/her strategy use and the progress he/she has made toward language proficiency and content learning.
5. **Expansion:** ELLs apply the strategy they have learned to other content instruction settings.

Learning Strategy Types: Learning strategies cluster in three categories:

1. **Metacognitive:** Thinking about and preparing for learning, which include activities such as:
 - o Organizational planning: Mentally planning how to accomplish a task, such as preparing to write the beginning middle and end of a story, or simply what tools are needed to accomplish a classroom task.
 - o Selective attention: On what part of the information or the task should the student focus at this time?

2. **Cognitive:** Interacting with the content material either mentally or physically, which include activities such as:
 - o Taking notes: Writing down important information from content reading, with the use T-charts, webs, and other graphic organizers . link to one of three graphic organizer PDF samples
 - o Grouping: Classifying information according to specific categories. link to one of three graphic organizer pf samples
 - o Elaborating prior knowledge: Tapping into what the student already knows about the topic

3. **Social/Affective Strategies:** Either interacting with others to facilitate learning or tap into attitudes, feelings, and knowledge of the task.
 - o Cooperating: Working with peers in specifically designed situations, fulfilling specific group interactional goals.
 - o Self-Talk: Mentally reviewing strategies needed for a specific task and/or making positive statements for reassurance and self-support.