

1. If you were a counselor and a part of your job was to place English Learners in an appropriate language support program, which type of program would you feel best suits a second grade Spanish monolingual student who knows little English but can read in Spanish at the first grade level? Compare and contrast two possible program types and discuss why you might select one program over another for this second grader.

If I were a counselor and I had to assign a second grade monolingual student with previous education in first grade with a program, I would match them with either a Maintenance Bilingual Program or a Newcomer Program. I think both programs offer the support in Academic learning focused in L1 but Maintenance gradually introduces English Literacy support. The Newcomer Program is also helpful because considering the child's age; it involves family/community support and includes an intensive study program in the students' choice language.

Of the two programs, I think that a child in second grade would benefit from direct assistance while learning a new language. I think that placing this student in a Newcomer Program is vital since she is a grade behind educationally. She has had interrupted studying and is in need of learning a new language and can still have support in her native language.

With the Newcomer Program, she will have the proper educational support within a year to help transition her to a mainstream class. In her case, I think community/family involvement needed in a program that is intensive and separate. I think this will lay the foundation she needs to obtain social skills and best prepare her and peers for engagement with one another.

2. How would you integrate students from different cultures into your classroom? Imagine that it is early November and three new students are placed in your class: one from Mexico, one from Russia, and one from Taiwan. Using examples describe (1) how you would evaluate the new students' strengths and needs; (2) specific activities you would incorporate into your classroom routines to facilitate their feeling of belonging in your class; and (3) strategies you might use to prepare the student for involvement with other students in groups and in pairs?

I would integrate arriving students by first identifying who they are what where they come from (figuratively and literally). If new students arrive in November, I would have to work with them to gain trust and be quick in addressing their needs and supporting them in recognize their strengths.

I would purposefully carve time to conduct "talk circles". By using an icebreaker such as a Talk Circle, I could plan to facilitate one at the beginning of each month as a check-in point as well as a way to introduce new ideas (in this case, getting to know new peers). If new students come later in a semester, this would present the best opportunity to welcome them into a class community that is already familiar with respect, which is important in conducting and normalizing Talk Circles. Talk Circles would include topics like "Family Origins" with the purpose of celebrating class diversity.

The text also has suggestions in maintain student involvement. I really like the idea of assigning students to semester-long small groups in class. This can help foster trust and accountability between peers. In the case of the three new students, I would not seat them together because that might cause more attention from other established "home groups".

3. Discuss the effect you believe the focus on academic standards and assessment will have on you as an individual teacher. In addition, discuss the use of high stakes, standardized testing in the evaluation of student progress. How will you deal with the challenges of high stakes testing on your students, on you as the teacher, and on your school in general? Are there specific accommodations you will use when testing ELL's? Please read the article below( further reading) for more information on standardized testing of ELL's.

“Standardized test performance may play a part in deciding grade retention or promotion of students in elementary, middle, and high school.” It is my hope that I deliver my best ability to educate students and English Language Learners alike. I can still try best practices in the classroom and accept being accountable to whatever the result of my teaching may be. I believe that all students deserve access to education and the equity of that education. With the use of technology, educators can help foster a safe digital environment and help create a classroom where students are safe to learn.

Based on the additional article we read, if learning can easily be abrupt, I believe it is important to keep myself accessible to current students and work with them based on my core beliefs as a teacher. I can tailor lessons to the direct needs of students accordingly with testing and maintain language acquisition. I would also use the support of the family to strengthen my teacher preparation so that regardless of where a student goes in education, the family is on board with high quality programming.