Language Scaffolding

There are three things to keep in mind when teaching academic language.

1. Academic language must be introduced and then reinforced.
2. Academic language can be more than content area vocabulary.
3. It is important to create assessments that measure knowledge in a meaningful way.

Language Scaffolding refers to the visuals, graphics, modeling, and cooperative learning strategies that a facilitator implements within a classroom. All the following strategies break learning into smaller chunks and provide a structure or tool for students to engage with the content.

Sentence Stems

Why: Sentence stems are aids that help ELs respond in complete sentences. In giving sentence stems we are introducing language patterns that will assist ELL students with the acquisition of the English language. Sentence stems (or frames) also provide structure so that ELs can eventually produce sentences on their own.

When: Frames can be used to initiate small group discussions or to provide students with a template of how to engage in asking questions.

How: The blanks can be located in the beginning, middle, or end of sentences. English learners can be required to fill in one word or more to finish the sentence. **Sentence stems should be visible around the classroom space and formally introduced at the beginning of instruction.**

CRITICAL THINKING: the ability to analyze and evalaute information. This can involve questioning, problem solving, forming arguments, debating, comparing & contrasting		
Evidence of Social Emotional Skill	**Aligned Cognitive Skill**	**Suggested Sentence Stems**
Perspective Taking Problem Solving Reflection	Forming Interpretations Revising Meaning Predicting Analyzing	I agree with what_____ said because_____ I disagree with what_____ said because _____ This reminds me of_____ I wonder _____ What would happen if _____ I predict _____ because _____ How come _____ ? I know that _____ because _____ The most challenging thing was _____

| | | Today I asked _____ |
| | | I thought _____ was _____ because _____ |

PERSEVERANCE: the ability to continue with a task despite encountering obstacles and challenges.		
Evidence of Perseverance	**Aligned Cognitive Skills**	**Suggested Sentence Stems**
Embracing Mistakes	Monitoring	Another strategy I could use could be _____
Values Process of Product	Clarifying	I predict if I change _____ then _____
Goal Setting	Recognizing Connections	At first I thought _____ but now I _____
		Today I was successful because _____
		The pattern I noticed was _____
		To understand better, I need to know more about _____
		I want to know more about _____
		My top priority is _____
		The next step I need to take is _____

Graphic Organizers

Why: Graphic organizers are a great tool to use when teaching English language learners (ELLs). Visual illustrations allow ELLs to process and organize material while learning new content and vocabulary.

When Graphic organizers can be used to support a range of activities during a lesson. These tools allow students to process, organize, analyze, and share information. Graphic organizers can support in the following manners:

- **Pre-Teaching Vocabulary:** graphical reading guides showing sequences and relationships prepare students for the important terms and vocabulary they will encounter during the activity.
- **Prewriting:** brainstorming and drawing or mapping the relationship between a topic and its details will help students narrow down and select a topic before beginning the writing process.
- **Notetaking:** codifying information in graphical form (such as a two-column compare and contrast chart), while reading, helps students lock down and retain pertinent concepts, facts, figures, etc.
- **Summarizing:** summarizing information (such as cause and effect factors) in a cause/effect diagram helps students follow processes, make inferences, and draw conclusions.

Comprehension Checks

Why: When asked if they understand the directions, most English learners will say yes, when in fact they have not. Comprehension checks ask students to demonstrate their understanding through open-ended exercises, allowing the facilitator to modify instruction as needed based on student responses.

When: Comprehension checks can be used to assess understanding after giving instructions or as a student is working to grasp a new concept.

How:

Verbal Explanation: Ask students to explain concept or directions back to you.

Open-Ended Questions: Ask students open-ended questions that will reveal their level of understanding in the answer. A close-ended or yes/no question will not always reveal a student's level of understanding

Written Reflection: Ask an open-ended question for students to respond to in a short written form (or by drawing if appropriate for the question). This can be used as a "do now" at the start of class to show you what students understood from a previous lesson, or anytime during the class.

Understanding Scale: Ask students to self-identify their level of understanding on a scale (popular methods are: thumbs up/thumbs down, raise fingers 1-5, hold up a green/yellow/red post-it). This method relies on self-reporting, so it should not be the only method used. It does offer the unique advantage of promoting peer-learning and leadership, as it allows you to ask students who report higher levels of understanding to explain or teach to their peers.

Signal: Establishing a signal students can use if they do not understand instruction. While this strategy is helpful if students utilize it, it does rely on self-reporting, and should not be the only method used.

Word Wall

Why:
English learners must learn and use thousands of new words in their various subject discipline studies. They are required to perform complex tasks using new vocabulary. Word walls provide an approach to meaningful teaching of vocabulary with an emphasis on student engagement and higher level thinking skills, build vocabulary, reinforce understanding of subject-specific terminology with a focus on students internalizing key concepts, help students improve spelling and awareness of spelling patterns, provide visual cues for students, and encourage increased student independence when reading, writing, and problem-solving.

When:
A small number of targeted vocabulary words can be added each lesson and referred to continually throughout a unit or term.

How:

Once a word wall is in use, students should be given opportunities to interact with and reinforce the key terms.

Whole Class Activities:
Mystery Word: Introduce a new word by writing the letters in a scrambled order. To assist students in unscrambling the word, give clues, either about the word's meaning or about how it is spelled. Students apply their knowledge of spelling patterns, as well as activate their prior knowledge, depending on the clues given.

Visiting Word: After students have worked on a word wall for a substantial period of time, add a "visiting" word. This encourages students to do a review of the word wall as they hunt for the new word. Present the visiting word as the new word for the day.

Missing Word: Take one of the words off the word wall and rearrange the remaining words. Students scan the word wall and figure out which word is missing. Give clues to help to determine the missing word.

Quick Definitions: Provide a definition (orally and/or written on the board) of one of the word wall words. Students choose and write the word to match the definition. Repeat the process encouraging students to review all the words as they select the answer.

Looking at Spelling: Students use masking tape to 'underline' the part of the word that is typically difficult to spell (e.g., because it is an exception to a rule, a homonym, hard to hear phonetically). Using coloured strips of masking tape, students underline common spelling patterns in the words such as 'i' before 'e,' double consonants, or 'qu.'

Small Group Activities:
Word Pictures: Working in teams, students select one of the words from the word wall and illustrate it on the board or on chart paper. The opposing team gets a point for a correct guess and illustrates another word.

Word Relationships: Each student shares the word on their word card with a partner, and together, they decide on a way that their two words are related or have something in common. A time limit could be imposed after which students rotate to a new partner and repeat the process. After doing this a few times, the pair could join with another pair, and see if they can find a relationship between the four words. Discussing similarities and differences helps students to master new vocabulary meanings.

Word Cards Partner Game: Pairs of students take turns choosing a word card and offering a definition for the word. The partner guesses and spells the word.

Parts of Speech: Each small group is given a part of speech and must decide which words on the word wall fall into the category. If more than one group is looking for the same part of speech, they compare lists and discuss any discrepancies. Small cards can be affixed adjacent to the words on the word wall to identify the part of speech for each word.

Drama: Students choose a word from the word wall and improvise a situation that portrays the word. Peers guess the word.

Plurals: Small groups are assigned a group of words to pluralize. Students identify the nouns and tape the plural ending of the word on the word wall. Discuss each group's work as a class.

Word Ad: Each group chooses a word, and brainstorms all the possible uses of the word. They create a radio or television ad to 'sell' one of the words from the word wall and present it to the class. As a variation, students think of a product for which they create a radio advertisement, using as many words as possible from the word wall. The group avoids making direct reference to the product and asks the class to guess what it is that the ad is trying to sell.

Categories: Students create categories and group the words from the word wall to fit those categories. Set the number of words that are allowed in a "miscellaneous" category and create a maximum and minimum number of categories that can be used. This activity could be done individually first; then students share and compare their categories with a partner. They share their groups of words with the class who guess the principle behind the sorting.

Musical Words: In groups of five or six, with each group member having one word card, students circulate the cards within their groups, while music is playing. When the music stops, the group members take turns giving the meaning of the word they have. Group members can challenge the correctness of the definition offered by their peer. If a group member cannot provide a definition, the group members discuss the meaning, asking the teacher for assistance, if necessary.

Prefixes and Suffixes: Each small group is given a set of the suffix and prefix cards and decides to which words on the word wall they can add them. As a variation, assign each group a set of words from the word wall for which they must decide the appropriate suffixes and prefixes.

Contextualization: Students write about a situation in which a word wall word would be commonly used. The student reads the situation to the class, who then guess the relevant word. As a variation, students portray multiple contextual situations, if applicable, e.g., brackets are something that could be spoken about in both writing and construction contexts.

Word Origins and Root Words: Each group finds the word origin and root words of a set of word wall words and presents its findings to the class. As a variation, groups give the origin of a word and the class guesses the corresponding word wall word.

Names for Musical Groups: Students brainstorm creative names used by musical groups from both the past and present. After looking at the unique and varied nature of the names, students use one to three words from the word wall to create a name for a musical group. As an extension, students could write a description of the fictitious group and its style of music.

Individual Activities
Definition Bingo: Students fill in a bingo-type grid with word wall words. As definitions are read out, students cross out the corresponding word on their grid. The first person to

get a complete line of words wins. As a variation: give synonyms or antonyms for appropriate word wall words.

Word of the Day: Choose a "Word of the Day." Encourage students to use the "Word of the Day" meaningfully during the class and highlight appropriate use. Add the word to the word wall.

Words in Writing: Encourage students to use the word wall words in their daily classroom writing. When work is collected or read in class, highlight the words from the word wall that are used appropriately.

Memory Association: Encourage students to make connections and increase comprehension by selecting a word wall word that connects to a positive personal memory. Students explain the connection in writing and share their writing with a partner. Volunteers read their writing aloud to the class.

Maximum Words in a Story: Students write a story involving as many words from the word wall as possible within a given time frame. Students underline all the word wall words they used and share their stories in small groups. Each group decides which to read aloud, e.g., the story with the most words or the most creative story.