

Teaching Speakers of Other Languages

General Speaking Tips

- Speak slowly...pause often
 - Before transitions
 - Before topic changes
 - Between contrasting ideas
 - After each item on a list
 - After asking a question
 - To add emphasis to a point
- Enunciate! Don't shout!
 - Speak clearly. There is no need to shout.. if they don't understand, speaking louder won't help.
- Keep it simple!
 - Subject + Verb + Object.
I read the book.
- Limit your vocabulary.
- Use a word's most common meaning.
- Avoid wordiness.

Replace	With
make a connection to	Connect
offer an invitation to	Invite
situated to the south	south of
very important	important
a two week span of time	two weeks

- Use transition words (you may need to teach them too!)
 - first, second, third
 - First, then, next, now
 - begin, continue, finally
- Use active verbs!

Active Voice	Passive Voice
The man types the letter.	The letter is being typed by the man.
The woman repaired the computer.	The computer was repaired by the woman.
The nurse aide checked the resident's vitals.	The vitals of the resident were checked by the nurse aide.

- Avoid using idioms or slang expressions.

- Avoid two word verbs in your presentation. Some two-word verbs are included in the vocabulary because they are so commonly used. Students will need to learn many of these.

Avoid	Use
take off	remove
back up	return
clean up	clean
jot down	write
make up	create
turn on	start

- Repetition is helpful when learning pronunciation. You may need to encourage students to practice aloud.
- Try to pair up students for activities so that you have one more advanced to assist the other.
- Conversation and discussion is an extremely important part of language learning. Encourage students to discuss vocabulary words and lessons. Ask questions that will encourage the student to answer other than “yes” or “no”.
- Correct pronunciation during exercises when they are designed to improve pronunciation. Do not stop a conversation or discussion repeatedly to correct simple pronunciation errors. It will interrupt the flow of the conversation.
- When helping a student with difficult pronunciation, you may need to instruct the student to look at your mouth as you pronounce the word. In some cases, it will probably be helpful to describe the position of your tongue, teeth, and lips. For example, many students find pronunciation of “th” very difficult. If you explain to students to place their tongue touching the bottom of the upper teeth and then tell them to simply blow through their mouth, they can begin to get the “feel” for “th”. Encourage them to practice pronunciation at home in front of a mirror.
- Encourage students to create their own “dictionary”
- Encourage students to listen to other speakers. Sometimes students seem to improve with listening but they have only improved listening to you. The same goes for the student’s pronunciation – has it actually improved or is the teacher just getting better at understanding?
- Check for understanding by asking students to repeat what you said in their own words.