

## Summer Institute 2009 Beginning ESL Collective Intelligence Group

### What's Working/Successes

- Conversation line up: starter questions, produces original language
- Topical questions to share knowledge and make students comfortable with each other
- Using student mentors
- Quizzing to develop confidence, test taking skills, and give feedback
- Rosetta Stone program
- Better use of volunteers/consistent volunteers
- Teachers developed scope and sequence for all ELL levels in our program
- More computer time
- Pre-literate students in their own class
- Students helping students
- Use of a data management system
- Class socials-for individualized setting they can socialize with other students
- Call absent students to encourage them to return
- Games of all kinds
- Personal attention to students; building rapport—if students feel connected there is better learning and communication
- Students name and share their skills/talents with each other
- Frequently changing classroom arrangement
- Using individual white boards/chalk boards
- Use a sock over blackboard eraser—works great on white boards
- Total Physical Response (TPR)
- Picture dictionaries
- [www.reepworld.org](http://www.reepworld.org)
- Live Action English software
- Activities that get students moving and community building activities: interviews, mingles, surveys, LEA stories, post-it note graphs, fluency circles/lines
- Routine warm ups: sentence writing, group reading activities, journals
- EFF: Equipped For the Future
- Side by Side for conversation
- Creating learning modules for reading, CASAS, grammar and content
- Writing the class schedule on the board
- Working with student generated texts
- Students email teacher with gmail accounts—students chat
- Group and pair work, students work with others who have different first language
- Discuss attendance goals openly
- Projects-dramatization

## **Problems/Challenges**

- Multilevel classes (especially related to oral skills and literacy skills)
- Inconsistent attendance because of child care and transportation, not sure how to help students catch up
- High turn over
- Transitioning from pair/group work to instruction time
- Students talking when teacher is instructing
- Students losing knowledge from one week to the next
- Students not participating in activities (motivation and for cultural reasons)
- Fear of mistakes
- Temperaments, cultural differences
- Policy of when to dismiss students (2.5 years?)
- Lack of computers, lack of space
- Never have enough time
- Lack of volunteers/uncooperative volunteers
- Exhausted students
- Students not moving up
- Gaining access to family literacy class for beginners
- Class meets infrequently
- Understanding students/making myself understood
- Planning/time management—the needs are great for our students, but time is limited
- Learning disabilities/mental health issues
- People with same first language sitting together
- Tardiness/leaving early
- Cell phones
- Finding adult reading material for beginning level
- Balancing CASAS and curriculum
- Consistent integration of grammar, conversation, life skills, etc.

## Solutions

- **Multilevel:** use volunteers (pull outs, divide class), different expectations within the same lesson, students helping each other, focus on positives, independent work on computers (everyone works at their own level), students group/partner work, schedule on the board
- **When transitioning:** be silent, wait for silence, use a bell
- **Losing knowledge:** quizzing, including past content in later lessons, expect regular attendance—waiting list
- **Motivation:** make objectives clear, break it down into small steps, positive reinforcement, homework—ownership, draw from past experiences
- **Students not moving up:** quiz practice, writing practice, encourage outside of class reading of any type, test taking skills
- **Absenteeism:** follow up phone calls, managed enrollment, create IEPs, specific start/intake times, attendance calendars, attendance prizes/certificates, monthly attendance check-ins, post and emphasize changes in the schedule,
- **Class meets infrequently:** create continuity by establishing class routines and routine tasks for individuals
- **Students come late:** attendance drawings/prizes, food in class must be done by a certain time, warm up activities that are easy to join in
- **Exhausted students:** hands on activities, increased student involvement
- **Students talking while teacher is talking:** teacher signal, invitation to talk in the hall, tell them “I’m beautiful. Look at me.”
- **Cell phone use:** teach them how to silence cell phones, ask to talk outside classroom
- **Learning disabilities/mental health issues:** community resources and speakers, PANDA, games/activities to help with stress, volunteers work with students 1-1 or in small groups, students helping students, classroom community building
- **Open enrollment:** pair new students with higher level students, new student works with volunteer

## Unanswered Questions/possible future workshop topics

- Planning/time management
- Accessing resources for students/advocacy—what is out there?  
Examples: the Mn dept of health, VOA
- Implementing managed enrollment