

# Tips for Communicating with English Learners

WNC English Group

## GOALS of the WNC English Group:

- a. Support learners in their efforts to develop their English language and literacy skills.
- b. Invite the international community to actively participate in our community.
- c. Inform learners about activities and resources available to them.

## TIPS for communicating with English learners:

### 1. Speak slowly

### 2. Don't use idioms

Instead of...	Say...
Well, that only happens <i>once in a blue moon</i> .	It does not happen often.
She really <i>has an edge</i> over the other marketers.	She is very talented.
I really <i>dropped the ball</i> on this one.	I forgot to ~. / I didn't ~.
<i>How in the world...?</i>	How...?
Well, <i>suit yourself!</i>	Ok!

- Idioms: <http://www.learnenglishfeelgood.com/americanidioms/index.html>

### 3. Simplify language / avoid nuance

Instead of...	Say...
Now, what you're gonna wanna do is just take the paper like this and fold from this corner here over to the other side	Fold the paper in half.
I could just pass out right now!	I'm very tired.
No, that's okay. (w/ tone)	No.

- English slang: <http://www.manythings.org/slang/>

### 4. Use body language and gestures

### 5. Write/draw

- Symbols, pictures, use different colors
- "Sketching for people who really can't draw" (Great article): <http://bit.ly/2jxQTWM>

### 6. Let students teach

## 7. Stick to English

- Especially commands, compliments, please, thank you, etc.

## 8. Comprehension first, then production

	Comprehension (Receptive)	Production
	Learners see or hear ( <i>receive</i> ) the English word and demonstrate comprehension of its meaning.	Learners <i>produce</i> the English word on their own by speaking or writing it.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BINGO - Learners hear word and must find corresponding square.</li><li>• Charades - Learners are given a word and must act it out.</li><li>• Filling in the blanks (with a word bank).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Picture flashcards - Learners see the image and say the word</li><li>• Spot the difference - Learners say what's different between two pictures.</li><li>• Learners write an email to their child's teacher.</li></ul>

## 9. Repetition

## 10. Recast (an error correction technique)

Repeating the learner's error back to the learner in the corrected form. For example:

T: What did you do last weekend?

S: I play outside.

T: Cool! You played outside?

S: Ah yeah, I played outside.

S: I like watch TV.

T: I like **to** watch TV, too!

What shows do you like **to** watch?

## 11. Know your grammar

Sample Question	Grammar Answer
When do you use "how many" vs. "how much"?	Use "how many" with <b>countable nouns</b> (i.e. dollars, water bottles, cups of sugar) and "how much" with <b>uncountable nouns</b> (i.e. money, water, sugar)
When do you use "I am ~" vs. "I have ~" with physical descriptions?	<b>I am + [adjective]</b> ( <i>I am pretty / I am old</i> ) <b>I have + [noun]</b> ( <i>I have blue eyes/ I have long hair</i> )

- <http://www.ef.com/english-resources/english-grammar/countable-and-uncountable-nouns/>
- <http://www.ef.com/english-resources/english-grammar/>
- <https://www.englishgrammar101.com/>

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** for ESL teaching:

- <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources-0>
- <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanEnglishatState> - Really great graphics
- <http://www.fluentu.com/english/educator/blog/>