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**“The limits of my language are the limits of my world.”<sup>1</sup>**  
 –Ludwig Wittgenstein

### Key Characteristics<sup>2&6</sup>:

- English language learners are students in English-language schools whose first language is other than English or is a variety of English that is significantly different from the variety used in Ontario’s schools.

- They may be Canadian-born or newly arrived from other countries.

- They come from diverse backgrounds and school experiences, and have a variety of needs.

- Observe their surroundings carefully

- Rely on first language

- Be confused and self-conscious

- Rely on visuals and diagrams to understand and communicate

- Experience silent breaks

- Observe others before attempting a task

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# English Language Learners

**English Language Learners (ELL) are students who need support with the English Language. Their first language is not English or is a variety of English that is significantly different**

**ELL’s vary in terms of level or language proficiency and time spent in Canada.<sup>4</sup>**

-Definition according to Ontario’s Ministry of Education

**We all SMILE in the same language!**



## Facts about School 5&8:

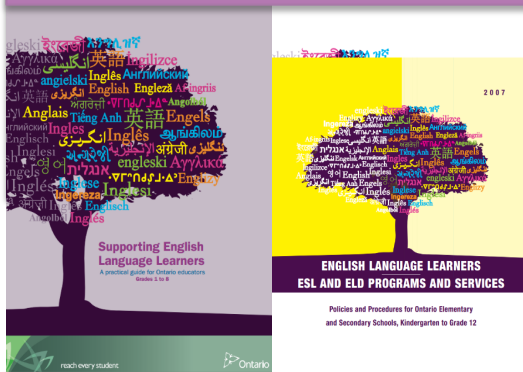
- The average ratio of ESL/ELD teachers to ELL students is 1:73 in elementary schools.
- Approx. 200,000 students in Ontario elementary & secondary schools receive special education programs and services.
- In Toronto, 31% of the population speaks a language other than English or French at home.

## Modifications<sub>4</sub>:

- Modification of some or all of the subject expectations may be required so that they are challenging but attainable for the learner at his or her present level of English proficiency.
- Adjust reading level materials to the student's reading level
- Shortened assignments

**"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart."**<sub>1</sub>

– Nelson Mandela



## Resources for Educators:

- English Language Learners: ESL and ELD Programs and Services, Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, K- Grade 12<sub>4</sub>  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esl/eldprograms/esl/eldprograms.pdf>
- Supporting English Language Learners: A practical guide for Ontario educators, Grade 1-8<sub>3</sub>  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esl/eldprograms/guide.pdf>

## Environmental Accommodations<sub>7</sub>:

- Seat students where they can hear and see well, & near classmates who will provide support and language modeling.
- Provide a quiet study space

## Instructional Accommodations<sub>7</sub>:

- Allow students to demonstrate understanding through drawings, pictures, or diagrams, graphs, charts instead of written assignments
- Accept all attempts at oral communication without correcting errors
- Allow more time to complete assignment
- Use a cooperative learning format (pairs or group work) rather than direct instruction
- Assign a personal buddy to help the student learn the layout & rules of school & classroom
- Provided a list of basic sentence patterns or words with pictures for tasks, directions, & assignments
- Use vocabulary words & sentence structures at the instructional level of the student & that have meaning for the student.
- Simplify language for a task either verbally or written

## Instructional Strategies<sub>2</sub>:

- Assess the background knowledge of your students
- Use many mediums as possible to convey information
  - Oral, written, videos, teacher demonstrations
- Use think-alouds & Think-Pair-Share
- Use visual display
  - Imagery serve as cues
- Word walls: Alphabetically arranged high-frequency words displayed

## Differentiated Instruction<sub>7</sub>:

- Extensive use of visual cues, manipulatives, pictures, diagrams & graphic organizers
- Previewing of textbooks
- Pre-teaching of key specialized vocabulary
- Encouragement of peer tutoring & class discussion
- Strategic use of students' first languages
  - Use of bilingual dictionaries & simplified text

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## Assessment Accommodations<sub>4</sub>:

- Using of assessment accommodations (e.g. extra time; use of alternative forms of assessment, portfolios; simplification of language & instructions)
- Permitting students to complete non-language-based assessments that show comprehension of course content.
- Providing a range of question types on test.
- Using visuals for assessment purposes. - Making project work part of assessment.
- Allow extra time
- Use oral interviews to assess understanding
- Assign assessment tasks that require the completion of graphic organizers instead of an essay
- Allow students to use a computer to write an assignment instead of paper and pencil
- Let students act out the story to demonstrate understanding

