

Linguistically Appropriate Practice

It is important to use Linguistically Appropriate Practice (LAP) when working with newcomer students learning English or French¹ as an additional language.

LAP builds on the student's language and literacy skills, incorporating their home language and experiences in the classroom. LAP views languages as a resource, treating bilingualism and plurilingualism as assets. Students from diverse language backgrounds and cultures enrich the learning environment of the classroom, including the virtual one.

LAP represents culturally and linguistically responsive instruction drawing on the cultural knowledge, backgrounds, and experiences of the students to make the learning more meaningful. Teachers need to provide opportunities that validate and affirm the value of the student's own language and experiences. The following provides a description of how to use LAP in the classroom or digital/remote learning environment.

LAP Strategies

General

- Create a safe and welcoming learning environment that is reflective of the students.
- Pair an additional-language student with a student who preferably speaks the same home language.
- Use consistent images/visuals in the students' visual schedule, in classroom signage, etc. (e.g., images for washroom, fountain, lunch).
- Smile and pronounce the student's name correctly.
- Use clear, simple language and avoid idioms.
- Be mindful of the pace at which you speak and use body language, gestures, and facial expressions.
- Use shorter sentences and rephrase and repeat information.
- Use visuals such as photographs, illustrations, real objects, and gestures, which can make content more comprehensible for students.
- Use graphic organizers, e.g., word maps, charts, and Venn diagrams, to assist EAL/FAL students in organizing ideas and information.
- Build thinking time and wait time when asking a question. This allows all students to reflect on questions and content, while providing them with extended time for processing from one language to another.
- Clearly write directions and important information, in addition to providing it orally.
- Learn greetings in your students' languages.

¹ It is important to note that, in our French Immersion classrooms, teachers encourage all learners to use French exclusively in order to create the French environment. This means that not all of the LAP strategies apply to the French Immersion context.

- Model expectations for students by showing examples of what the final assignment or piece of work should look like.

Use of Home Language or First Language

- Honour and allow use of home language or first language.
- Celebrate linguistic diversity, incorporating and drawing on the cultural, historic, and linguistic background of the student.
- Ensure that classroom displays reflect students' language backgrounds. Showcase home languages by adding home languages to classroom writing displays, charts/diagrams, and on labels for classroom materials.
- Create multilingual word walls/banks in the classroom or virtually.
- Post authentic visual materials (posters, etc.) from various languages and communities.
- Allow EAL/FAL students to confer and collaborate with peers who speak the same language. Pairs can be involved in group work or extended writing, or as an ongoing strategy.
- Allow EAL/FAL students to write in their own language, e.g., in attempting to answer a question or plan their response, making entries in a journal of ideas or reflections, mind-mapping, researching from the internet, summarizing what they have learned, etc.
- Provide bilingual dictionaries or let students create bilingual personalized glossaries. This [Bilingual Glossaries](#) web page (New York University 2021) has glossaries for different grade levels for English language arts, math, science, and social studies. There are also glossaries of cognates, a guide of literacy terms, and devices for language arts.
- Use dual-language books.
- Create a centre where languages are explored and shared or set aside time in the schedule to share languages, including multilingual music.
- See [Helpful Links to Support English/French as an Additional Language](#) for ways to access materials in various languages.
- Introduce your multilingual class in an email home to families.

Create a Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Learning Environment

- Know your students academically, socially, and emotionally. Learn about their families, cultures, and interests.
- Draw on, value, and build on the cultural knowledge, backgrounds, and experiences of the students in order to make learning more meaningful.
- Use prior knowledge of students in examples and background information to support their learning.
- Use the students' cultural experiences in daily instruction and embrace home language and students' families as assets.
- Create a learning environment that represents and respects all students, while communicating high academic standards and expectations for everyone.
- Honour student identity and let students share their culture.

- Understand your own cultural identity, and its consequences, including examining your cultural behaviour patterns.

LAP Learning Experiences

The following provides a summary of LAP, language-rich learning experiences, and Total Participation Techniques (Chumak-Horbatsch 2019 and 2012; Himmele and Himmele 2009 and 2017) for in-class and virtual learning:

- **Language Chart:** Create a display to show words and their countries of origin, different writing systems, celebratory days, etc.
- **Multilingual Newspaper:** Invite families to provide a home-language section of a newspaper (email, paper copy, etc.) and to read the section to the class. Relate articles to the other students' home countries.
- **Country in a Box:** Students can fill an empty shoebox with items from their country (e.g., flags, coins, maps, books, photos) and present them in class or virtually. Students can also write about their items, using sentence frames. Encourage discussions in class or virtually.
- **Language Passport:** Have students complete a Language Passport with their families to bring to class and share information about their language, background, and culture.
- **Virtual Mother Tongue Mornings:** Have regular sessions with students in the morning to talk about their culture, language, and food. Family members can join the sessions virtually to add to the information sharing.
- **Home-Language Story Sharing:** Share stories, in-class and virtually, using dual-language picture books.
- **Translate a Range of Texts:** Translate stories, rhymes, poems, and songs so that they can be used in daily activities. Use Google Translate or engage with family members virtually for their help with the translations.
- **Stories in Multiple Languages:** Use stories/novels available in multiple languages; they may be found at public libraries, the RCE/CSAP library, or online (e.g., [Storybooks Canada](#), [StoryWeaver](#), and [Unite For Literacy](#)).
- **Classroom Website:** Establish a classroom website where students can showcase their projects and class contributions.
- **Cultural Observances and Holidays:** Acknowledge significant observances and holidays. Include expressions and vocabulary in related activities and supplement learning by creating posters, etc.
- **Virtual Tour:** Visit places like museums and art galleries from students' home countries; generate discussions and related activities.
- **Compare and Contrast Languages:** Look at language families, speech sounds, writing systems, singular and plural, and text directionality. Compare expressions, idioms, etc.
- **Read-Aloud:** This is a valuable learning experience since there is a strong positive correlation between Read-Aloud experiences and vocabulary development. Encourage families to read to their child at home. Use Read-Aloud to promote multiple means of representation by allowing students to learn through text, audio, and the support of peers.

- **Audiobooks:** Listening to audiobooks has been linked to student motivation to read, increased vocabulary, writing skills, comprehension, and verbal fluency. It also increases use of reading strategies. Give students audiobooks for in-class listening and for homework.
- **Storytelling:** The storyteller and the purpose of storytelling may vary at different grade levels. Storytelling is beneficial for vocabulary, comprehension, and listening skills, while encouraging creative thinking and writing, and problem-solving. It allows EAL/FAL students to explore their own cultural roots and invites other students to experience diverse cultures. Digital storytelling uses digital media (photos, audio, and video) to create a story. Making opportunities to listen to and learn the “story” of the student’s life enables educators to plan meaningful tasks that are culturally responsive and build on the student’s prior experiences. For higher grades, peer-to-peer relationships can be strengthened by asking students to speak and write regularly about their lives in small, low-stress situations. Use conversation circles in class or virtually.
- **Quick-Write:** Select a prompt that you would like students to address. The prompt could be provided before a lesson, or at any point during a lesson. Ask students to take about 3–5 minutes to collect their thoughts and jot down their response in their home language. Students can use paper or whiteboard, or share their responses virtually.
- **Quick-Draw:** This technique can be used to see if students are able to understand and deeply analyze concepts. Choose a big idea or large concept within your lesson. Allow students 3–5 minutes to reflect on the meaning of the concept and draw an image of the concept. Students can use paper or whiteboard, or share their responses virtually.
- **Thumbs-Up When Ready:** Select a prompt that you would like students to address. Ask students to reflect on the prompt and give a thumbs-up when they are ready to move on. Students can use index cards, paper, whiteboard, or digital device to indicate they are “ready to share” or “still thinking.”
- **Presentation Grid:** Create a presentation grid, such as the one shown below, with questions/prompts that would apply to any presenter. While a person or group is presenting, non-presenters “collect data” by completing the grid with information related to prompts on top of the grid. If any of the boxes are empty at the end of the presentation, non-presenters can ask questions. Responding to the specific prompts during the presentation helps non-presenters remain actively engaged while helping to develop recording skills.

Presenter	Topic	Interesting fact	Interesting fact	Question I have
Name				
Name				
Name				

Extending Curriculum Topics

The following are ways to extend curriculum topics to include the countries of origin of EAL/FAL students:

- Include learning experiences that draw on the EAL/FAL student's background and experiences. For example: if studying the water cycle, research water-related issues in the student's home country; if studying landforms, talk about geographic features of the student's home country.
- Prepare and share multi-language math charts, e.g., math vocabulary and concepts translated by students and families. Use the math charts for ongoing reference.
- Use books written by authors from other countries.
- Examine customs and cultures.
- Include perspectives of individuals who come from the EAL/FAL student's home culture.
- Include learning experiences that draw on the EAL/FAL student's background and experiences.
- Invite family or community members to speak to the class virtually. Include multicultural materials and resources such as books written by authors from other countries.
- Refer to [Helpful Links to Support English/French as an Additional Language](#) for links and information about technological tools that can support EAL/FAL students.

Ideas to Share with Families

- Share your view that each family's language and culture is a source of pride and strength.
- Remind families how home language supports their children's growth in many ways, including learning English.
- Encourage families to share stories, rhymes, poems, sayings, and songs with their children, and to also read and tell stories in their home language.
- Explain to families that telling stories and reading in their home language teaches children words and ideas they will transfer into English/French.

EAL Moodle Site

For additional information about LAP, visit the EAL Moodle site at www.rebrand.ly/eal and use your GNSPES account username and password.



References

Chumak-Horbatsch, Roma. 2012. *Linguistically Appropriate Practice: A Guide for Working with Young Immigrant Children*. North York, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Chumak-Horbatsch, Roma. 2019. *Using Linguistically Appropriate Practice: A Guide for Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Himmele, Pérsida and William Himmele. 2009. *The Language-Rich Classroom: A Research-Based Framework for Teaching English Language Learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Himmele, Pérsida and William Himmele. 2017. *Total Participation Techniques – Making Every Student an Active Learner*. 2nd Edition. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

New York University. 2021. “Bilingual Glossaries and Cognates.” New York, NY: New York University. <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/language-rbern/education/bilingual-glossaries-and-cognates>.