

3 TIPS FOR TEACHING ESL ONLINE

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I have been teaching since 2005, but taught middle school ESL for four years and online ESL since 2016. I bring a unique perspective having learned a second language myself and having worked in both a bilingual setting and a full immersion setting. There are several ways to help students succeed, but they are easy to implement.

TIP ONE: MENTAL & EMOTIONAL

- Learning a second language is intimidating.
- Kids are already worried about making mistakes when learning.
- There's more anxiety when learning a second language vs. other subjects

What can you do?

- Stay Patient
- Be Empathetic
- Use Strategies that Support the Student's Level
- Be Welcoming and Kind
- Correct the Student When Necessary
- TPR, Modeling and Scaffolding
- Use Props and Visuals

TIP 2 STUDENT LEVEL

- If students are placed in a level that is too difficult for them, meet them where they are at.
- Just like we extend for advanced students, we need to water it down a lot for beginner students or students who are in a level that's too difficult.

How can you help?

- Teach basic vocabulary. It can be related to the lesson or it can be what the student needs. Leave notes in the feedback as to why you adapted the lesson
- Use very simple sentences related to the vocabulary you taught. Do not overwhelm the student.

TIP 3 BUILD RAPPORT

The most effective and genuine way to help your students learn is to build rapport with them. That means getting to know them, using strategies and props that they like based on their interests and personality.

With shy and introverted students, don't force them to speak. Asking too many questions can make them feel really uncomfortable. Trying to make them laugh can be difficult, and they might not see humor as important (Learn more in the book *Quiet* by Susan Cain).

See if you can ask the student a question after 5 minutes of teaching. For example, "What do you like?" The most important thing with introverts is to give them the space they need, help them to relax and feel comfortable, and slowly get to know them. You can't always do this in a 25 minute lesson, so don't worry if it takes a few sessions.

With outgoing and extroverted students we have a lot more opportunity to build rapport. You can get to know them more quickly through conversation and when they show their personality.