

Elementary ELL Support in British Columbia

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Outline

- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ ELL Policy Guidelines, Documentation, Yearly Timeline
- ❖ The BC ELL Standards
- ❖ Key Language Learning Theories
- ❖ Forms of ELL Support and Scaffolds
- ❖ Question and Answer Session

Introduction: English Language Learning in British Columbia

Definition:

The BC Ministry of Education defines English Language Learners (ELLs) as students...

“Whose primary language(s) of the home is/are other than English and who may therefore require additional services in order to develop their individual potential within BC's school system. Some students speak variations of English that differ significantly from the English used in broader Canadian society and in school; they may require ELL support”

Source: [BC Ministry of Education Legislation and Policy Glossary](#)

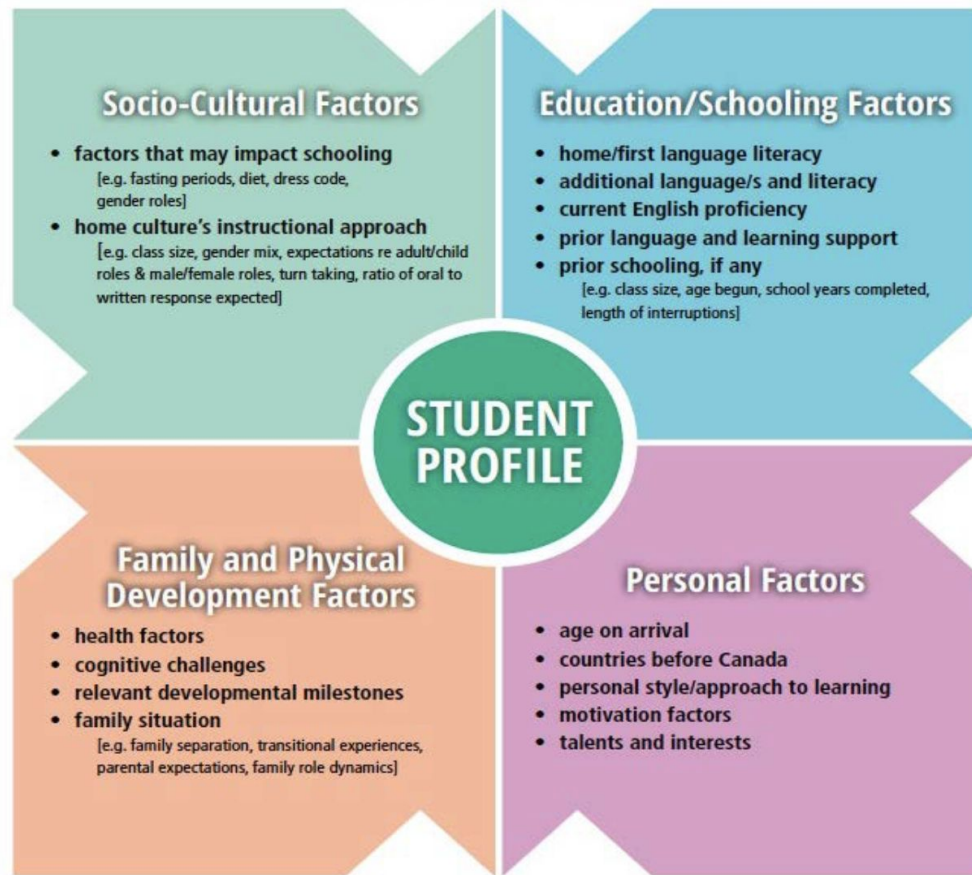
In BC Elementary Schools:

English Language Learners are all different and unique (as are all students).
There is great diversity in...

- ❖ individual identities
- ❖ family journeys/histories
- ❖ reasons for coming to Canada (or at home experiences in Canada)
- ❖ nature and level of support required
- ❖ prior experience with schooling

As well as different strengths, ideas, experiences, imaginations, multilingual resources...

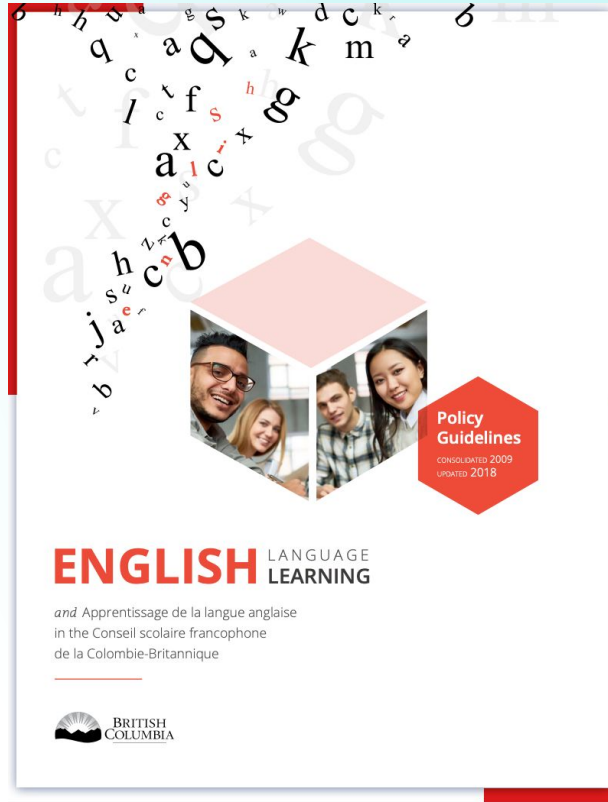




Source:
[BC ELL Standards](#)

Figure 1: Know your ELL student

British Columbia ELL Policy Guidelines

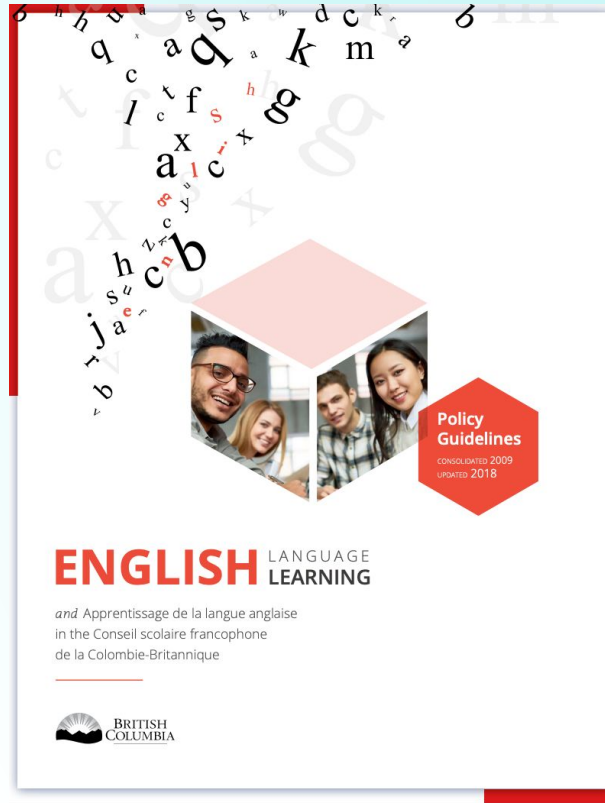


The full ELL Policy Guidelines document can be found [here](#)

Key Points

- ❖ all students must be **supported** and **included** in British Columbia schools
- ❖ students with **diverse home language backgrounds** will receive additional funding from the BC Ministry of Education for up to 5 years
- ❖ this funding will be used to provide **language support** for both **social** and **academic** English
- ❖ support can occur **in the classroom** or in **pull-out (targeted) sessions**
- ❖ an **ELL specialist** must be involved in planning and delivering services for students identified as ELL

ELL Documentation



Required ELL Documentation:

- ❑ Current **ELL Assessment** documents
- ❑ **Support Schedule** (to confirm that an ELL specialist is involved in planning and delivering services)
- ❑ **Annual Instructional Plan (AIP):** includes ELL proficiency levels, language learning goals, nature of support e.g., targeted or in-class, support strategies for home and school

*the AIP is also used for reporting student progress (communicating student learning)

ELL Specialists in British Columbia

An **ELL Specialist** is a teacher who has additional qualifications which allow them to provide **specialized language support**. Some British Columbia school districts have **separate ELL** and **Learning Support specialists**. Other school districts have a “**Blended Model**” with **Resource Teachers** who provide both ELL and Learning Support in schools.

ELL Specialist Qualifications

Additional qualifications for ELL Specialists in BC may include:

- a Master of Education in TESL
- a TESL/TESOL Certificate (from an accredited institution or recognized university)
- a Queen's University Post Graduate Certificate: English Language Learners in BC
- the following UBC Coursework (LLED 478C, or 478A and 478B and 489C, or 489A and 489B)
- equivalent course work from a recognized university

**More information on ELL specialist qualifications can be found on the [Make a Future](#) website*

Yearly Timeline

Initial ELL Identification Process: September

1. ELL specialists work together with the school office to determine which new students who would benefit from an ELL assessment
2. ELL specialist meets with student and completes an ELL assessment
3. Student's family/guardians are informed that ELL support would be beneficial
4. Student is identified as ELL and "claimed" by the school, added to the ELL program, and an Annual Instructional Plan (AIP) is created
5. ELL support begins before the end of September and continues throughout the school year according to an ELL Support Schedule*

***Note:** *ELL support schedules vary and are impacted by different factors e.g., number of ELL specialists at the school, nature of support (targeted or in-class), level of proficiency (Beginning and Developing students often require more intensive support)*

Example: September ELL Support Template

ELL Class Composition

Classroom Teacher:

Grade:

ELL Teacher:

Date:

Notes:

Descriptor <i>(Overall Level)</i>	Beginning	Developing	Expanding	Consolidating	Bridging
Snapshot	Student is in the beginning stages of language development	Student is showing progress in developing their language skills	Student is expanding in their language development to further access classroom learning outcomes	Student is consolidating their language skills in the academic environment	Student is bridging to the grade-level language proficiency of their peers
Students					

Shares students' different levels of ELL proficiency as outlined by the **BC ELL Standards**

Yearly Timeline

Spring Assessment: March-May

1. ELL specialists complete a set of “Spring ELL Assessments” (usually district and grade specific) with all the students they support
2. Assessments are reviewed and proficiency levels are recorded for different language skills: oral language, reading, writing, using a Spring Assessment Template
3. ELL specialists meet with classroom teachers to share Spring Assessment data and discuss student progress

Yearly Timeline

Re-designation or Exiting ELL Support: June

1. Based on Spring Assessment data and meetings with classroom teachers, ELL specialists determine which students will need continued ELL support next year (re-designation) and which students will “exit” (stop) receiving ELL support at the end of the school year (June)
2. ELL specialists work together with the school office to confirm which students will be re-designated and which students will be exiting
3. For exiting students, an Exit Letter is sent to students' families/guardians to confirm that ELL support is no longer required
4. All ELL specialists record which students will receive ELL support next year in a shared document to plan for the future

The BC ELL Standards

The BC ELL Standards are a **set of matrices** (rubrics) that provide common language and levels for describing **ELL Proficiency** and help educators **assess** and **support** ELL students.

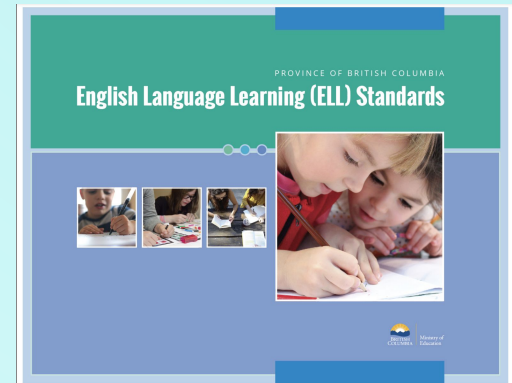
Organization

Language Skills (Includes matrices and Quick Scales)

- **Reading** (and viewing),
- **Writing** (and representing)
- **Oral Language** (includes receptive (listening)and expressive (speaking) skills

Age Groups

- **Primary** (Kindergarten to grade 3)
- **Intermediate** (grade 4 to grade 7)
- **Secondary** (grade 8 to grade 12)



The BC ELL Standards

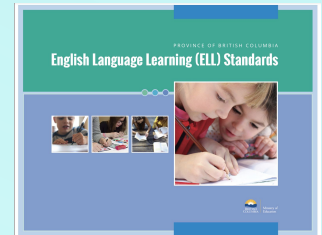
(p. 4-5)

Levels of Proficiency:

- **Beginning** – the student is in the beginning stages of language development
- **Developing** – the student is showing progress in developing their language skills
- **Expanding** – the student is expanding in their language development to further access classroom learning outcomes
- **Consolidating** – the student is consolidating their language skills in the academic environment, and
- **Bridging** – the student is bridging to the grade-level language proficiency of their peers

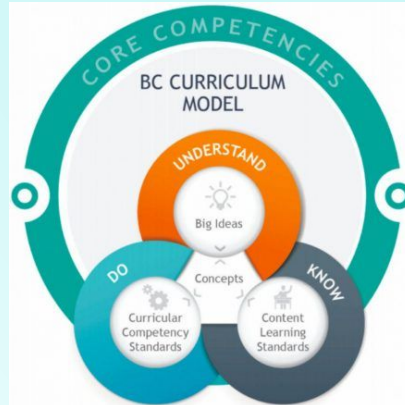
BC ELL Standards Small Group Activity

1. Search “**BC ELL Standards**” and find the PDF document
2. **Look at** the different **sections**, **matrices** and **quick scales** together
3. **Compare** different **age groups** and **language skills**
4. **Discuss** these questions: *How is this document the **same** as ELL assessment tools you have used before? How is it **different**?*



Introduction: The BC Curriculum

- ❖ encourages educators to connect **Big Ideas**, **Curricular Competencies**, and **Content Learning Standards**
- ❖ provides clear **learning objectives** and **goals** to guide the design of **classroom activities** and **assessments**
- ❖ all learning is **connected** by 3 overarching **Core Competencies** (sets of focused proficiencies that all students need in order to engage in deep, lifelong learning)



Source: Greater Victoria School District

ELL Support: Key Language Learning Theories

UBC Elementary Teacher Education Courses and **current ELL support** in BC Elementary Schools is largely built around a Functional Theory of Language, specifically Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, Hasan et al.) which is based on the work of Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky) and emphasizes **context** and **social interaction**.

Language is...

- a human tool
- a dynamic set of resources for making meaning in different situations and cultures

Teaching and learning is...

- a collaborative, context-dependent process of creating and disseminating new knowledge
- facilitated by language (inner speech and conversational interaction)

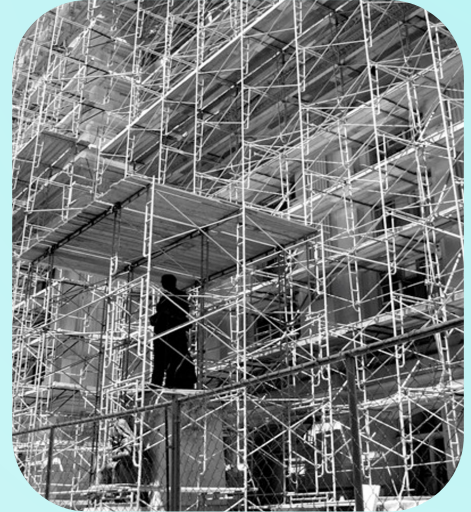
Key Concepts: Sociocultural Theory (A Social View of Learning)

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD):

the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)

Scaffolding: a term often attributed to Vygotsky, but it comes from Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976). Bruner describes scaffolding as:

a process of 'setting up' the situation to make the child's entry easy and successful and then gradually pulling back and handing the role to the child as he becomes skilled enough to manage it (1983, p. 60).



Key Concepts and Terms (*Gibbons, 2015*)

Comprehensible Input

- ❖ from the work of Krashen (1982)
- ❖ connected to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)
- ❖ providing input (language) and making it understandable by using scaffolds
- ❖ for example: using multiple modes (visual supports, text)



Slide focusing on Animal Habitats

Key Concepts and Terms

Stretched Output

- ❖ From the work of Merrill Swain (2000, 2005)
- ❖ learners need to be challenged to use language
- ❖ allows for students to try new language and receive feedback
- ❖ active use of language stimulates students to reflect on how the language works and deepens their awareness of linguistic forms and functions (Cummins & Early, 2015, p. 14)

Animal Research Vocabulary

- Biome: special area of land with different features (plants, animals, temperatures)
- Diet: what an animal eats
- Appearance: what an animal looks like
- Life Span/Cycle: stages of life, how long it lives
- Predators/Threats: animals/other factors that can harm an animal
- Fun Facts: extra/interesting facts

Vegetation

Sword Fern



Cedar Trees

Blueberries



Key Concepts Continued (Gibbons, 2015)

Social interaction

- ❖ allows for extensive language use
- ❖ helps students analyze and discuss language=deeper understanding of content and language
- ❖ focuses on students' questions, inquiries, interests





Use of home languages

- ❖ language learning builds (helps development in other languages)
- ❖ home languages can be used as an “anchor”

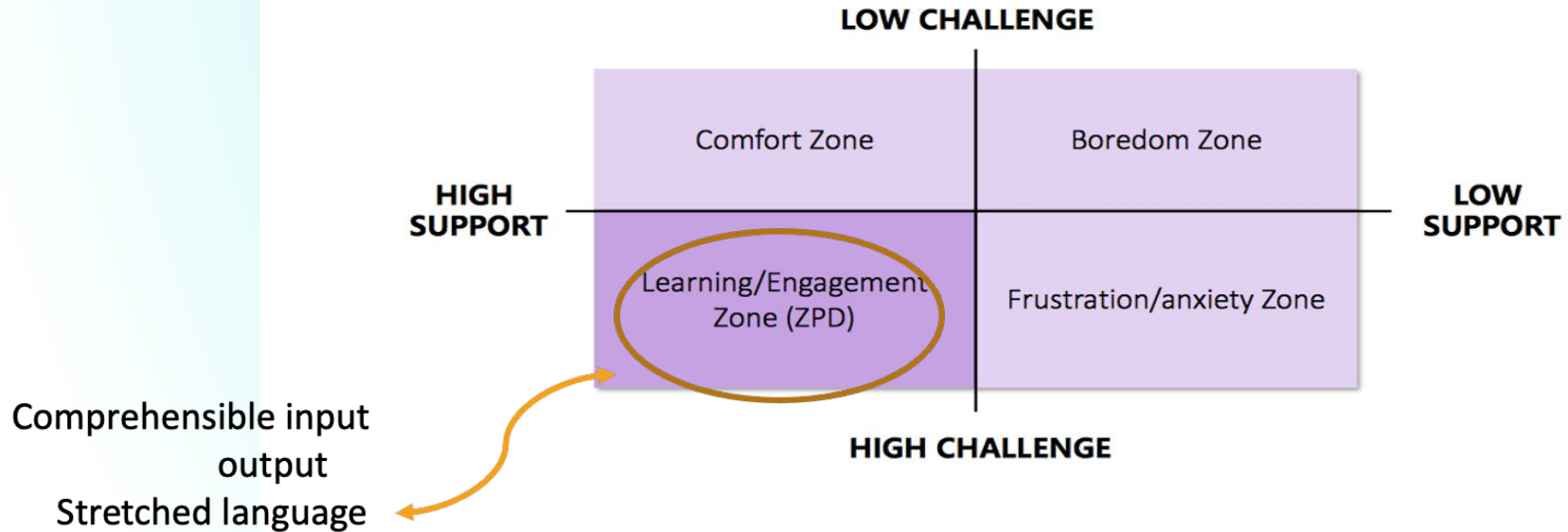
Translanguaging: "refers to both the discourse practices of bilinguals, as well as to pedagogical practices that use the entire complex linguistic repertoire of bilingual students flexibly in order to teach rigorous content and develop language practices for academic use." ([Hesson, Seltzer & Woodley, 2014, p.3](#))

- ❖ creating space for learners to use all of their linguistic resources



Topic: Maps		
Vocabulary (word and picture)	Definition (home language)	Sentence (s)
map 	نقشه	This is a map. It show us the directions.
compass 	قطب نما	This is a Compass It shows North, south, west and east.
north 	شمال	This is north It is a direction.
south 	جنوب	This is south. It shows down.

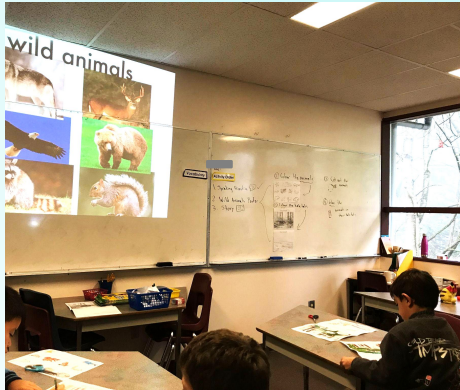
Creating a Supportive Language Learning Environment



adapted from Mariani, 1997

Forms of ELL Support: Targeted (Pull-out) Support

- the ELL specialist teaches a **small group** of students in a location **outside the regular classroom setting** e.g., *ELL room, library, flexible learning space*
- students are often grouped according to their **overall ELL proficiency level**, for example, a group of 5 Beginning ELL students
- targeted support sessions (lessons) focus on targeted **language skills** and **activities**



Forms of ELL Support: In-Class (Team-Teaching) Support

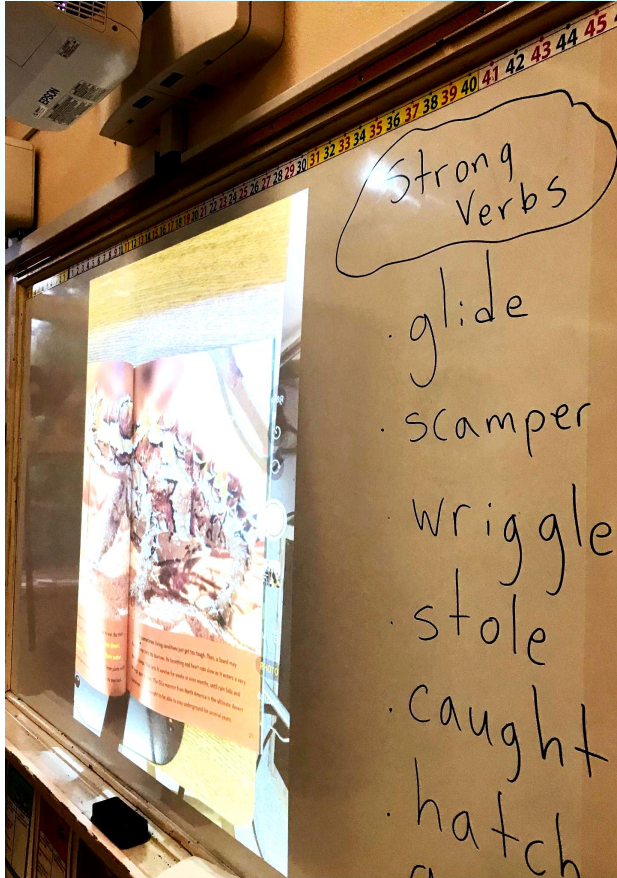
- the ELL specialist teaches together **with the classroom teacher** in the **regular classroom** setting
- teachers **collaborate** and **plan** effective ways to teach and support all students together, often using **scaffolds**
- team-teaching lessons often focus on **content-area academic vocabulary**, direct instruction of **language tasks** e.g., paragraph writing, and **differentiated activities**



ELL Scaffolds and Strategies for Targeted and Team Teaching Support: Using a Projector/Image Bank



ELL Scaffolds and Strategies: Academic Vocabulary Lists



Descriptive Paragraph

Name:

Topic:

First Draft

Introductory Sentence (Introduce the topic)

What are you describing?
Use a hook/Set the scene

Imagine you are gazing at a
magnificent ocean sunset scene.

Key Idea #1 (Describe the picture)

Use adjectives

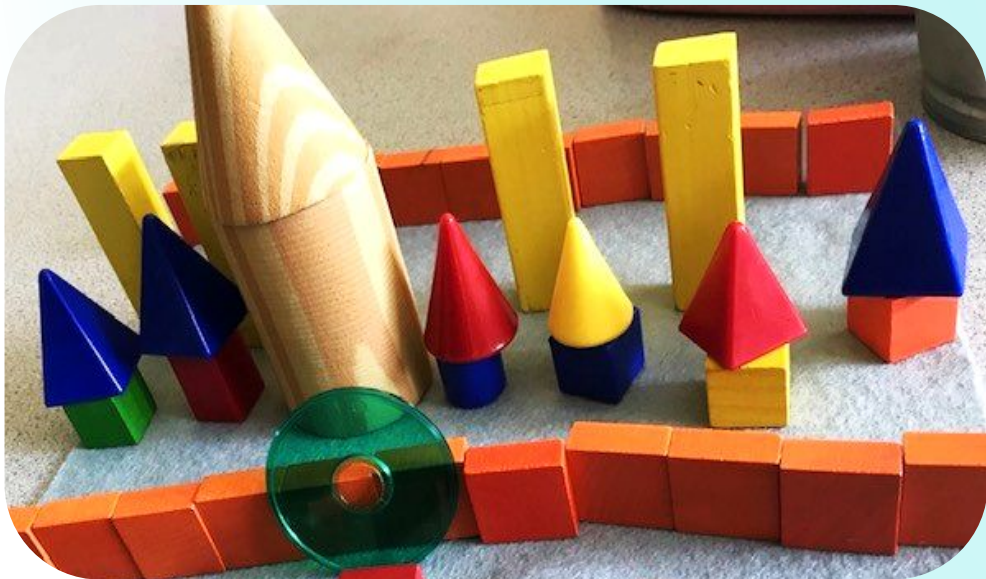
In the background, there is a **soft**
golden glow surrounded by **indigo**
and **orange** clouds.

Key Idea #2 (Describe the picture)

Use adjectives

In the front, you can see a **vast**
ocean with **miniature** boats bobbing
on it.

ELL Scaffolds and Strategies: Using Manipulatives and Hands-on Materials



ELL Scaffolds and Strategies: Experiential/Outdoor Experiences



ELL Scaffolds and Strategies: Interactive Pair and Group Work Activities



- ❖ students have to talk and work together to complete a task
- ❖ can use English and shared home languages
- ❖ examples: making a group story, information gap tasks, solving a problem

Example: Interactive Information Gap Activity

1. **Find** an activity partner
2. **Draw** a simple picture
3. Give **clear, step-by-step instructions** and teach your partner how to draw your picture
4. **Switch** roles and repeat the activity

ELL Scaffolds and Strategies: Using Digital Technology

- ❖ audio recording: using Voice to Text applications
- ❖ creating multilingual slide presentations
- ❖ reading digital books



Discussion Questions:

1. Which **language learning scaffolds** and **strategies** do you use?
2. **Why** do you prefer these scaffolds and strategies?

Using ELL Scaffolds: Determined by Each Educator

- ❖ **draws on** individual **strengths and skills**
- ❖ educators choose **practical scaffolds** that can be **consistently** integrated
- ❖ effective scaffolds and strategies **match different grades** and **teaching contexts**



A Personal Example: Learning Songs

- ❖ collaborative, used during team-teaching support
- ❖ features combined scaffolds: visual, auditory, movement-based
- ❖ to support ELL (and all) students in learning content-area academic vocabulary and concepts



Video Link:

<https://video.link/w/s9BPc>

Radiate, Reflect, Refract

R-E-F-R-A-C-T
IS THAT A RAINBOW THAT I SEE?

Conclusion

- ❖ all students must be **supported** and **included** in British Columbia schools, including students with **diverse home language backgrounds**
- ❖ qualified **ELL specialists** use the **BC ELL Policy Guidelines** and **ELL Standards** to guide them as they assess and support students identified as ELL
- ❖ **UBC Elementary Teacher Education Courses** and **current ELL support** in BC are based on a **Functional Theory** of language learning that emphasizes **context** and **social interaction**
- ❖ there are **two main forms** of ELL support in BC elementary schools: **Targeted** (pull-out) support and **In-class** (team-teaching) support
- ❖ individual educators use effective **ELL scaffolds and strategies** that build on their strengths and match their teaching context



Question and Answer Session