

# Preface

## New to This Edition

This fifth edition of *50 Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners* represents a major change in standards-based education. With adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), educators across the United States are reflecting on exemplary practices and research in strategies for supporting intellectual and educational growth in students of all ages. The Common Core does, however, present additional challenges for students who are in the process of acquiring English. In this edition, you will notice:

- **Six new strategies**, all of which are included to support teachers in preparing students to meet or move toward meeting the Common Core and the use of both social and academic English.
- **Close Reading** is a strategy that supports students in reading and rereading text to gain not only information but also perspective on an author's point of view and the use of language to present an image or point of view.
- **Verb Action** is a strategy that approaches the understanding of irregular English verbs through active learning and the combination of action, speaking, and writing.
- **Checking for Understanding** provides approaches that teachers can employ to closely monitor students' comprehension of material being presented in the classroom.
- **Cognate Strategies** presents ways to capture the knowledge of vocabulary that students possess in their native language and help them to understand the connections to English words.
- **RTI for English Language Learners** adapts an approach currently used in exceptional education to monitor and document growth in English learners.
- **Combining and Scheduling Strategies** suggests ways to use exemplary teaching strategies in combination with grouping and scheduling approaches to provide the time and opportunities that ensure English learners will be successful.
- **Self-evaluation rubrics** are included throughout this new edition to support teachers in ensuring that they are fully implementing exemplary strategies. These rubrics also provide ideas for improving teacher implementations.
- **Adaptation charts** provide information for teachers on approaches to adapting strategies for students at differing English language development levels.
- **Classroom examples** demonstrate approaches to CCSS. Over 20 percent of the classroom examples have been updated to reflect approaches that support implementation of the Common Core State Standards.
- **Video links** have been added to demonstrate the use of strategies, support the reader's understanding of the strategies, or discuss implementation issues.
- The video links replace the DVD that was a component in the previous edition. The video links contain some of the DVD videos but many new ones.

In order to add new strategies, we must delete some as well. The strategies we chose to delete from this edition were those suggested by professors who have used previous editions of the book, including:

handheld computers and smartphones, imaging, interactive comprehension building, scripting, wiki building

A number of these deleted strategies addressed specific technology applications. We chose to integrate the use of technology into classroom examples of other strategies. We decided on the technology to be included by talking to teachers across the nation. We were especially interested in technologies that are readily available to teachers.

## Acknowledgments

We are extremely appreciative of the professors who took the time to review the fourth edition and give us suggestions for improving the fifth edition. This is a time-consuming task, but improving educational strategies is obviously a priority to these professors: Cheridy Aduviri, Oregon State University; Joy Egbert, Washington State University; Laura Halliday, Southern Illinois University; John Haught, Wright State University; and Yin Lam Lee-Johnson, St. John's University.

# 1



## Predictable Routines and Signals

### Reducing Anxiety

**Predictable routines and signals** in the classroom are highly important in structuring a positive and nurturing environment and reducing anxiety of English language learners (Ferlazzo & Sypniewski, 2011; Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Because English learners do not always understand everything that is said in the classroom, having set patterns, routines, and signals helps them relax and not worry as much about being able to follow the sequence of events and activities during the school day. If they know what to expect, they can focus more of their energy on the instruction and less on what they will be expected to do next. Routines that can be set and are predictable include the sequence of the subjects to be taught, places within the classroom where certain things are stored and accessible to students, a certain spot on the chalkboard or bulletin board where reading or homework assignments are posted, a daily list that gives the routine in sequence, and hand or flashing light signals that indicate the close of one activity and the beginning of another (Goldenberg, 2008). Watch this video to see how teachers keep their students focused and alert, enabling students to connect to instruction rather than worry about what they are supposed to “do next.”



- How does the use of routines and procedures enhance the learning environment?
- How do ELLs benefit from the use of routines and procedures in the classroom?

Figure 1.1 (on next page) provides a list of predictable routines and signals that support English language learners in the classroom.

Although implementing predictable routines and signals is usually associated with elementary classrooms, this practice is also vital in secondary classrooms. In addition to classroom routines, secondary teachers must also make their academic expectations clear. As the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are implemented and assessed, academic expectations are changing. Fisher and Frey (2013) suggest introducing students to the Common Core expectations in a gradual way during the first month of school. Planning activities that support students in understanding how the expectations have changed helps prepare them to address those standards. Fisher and Frey list several changes that students must understand and begin to practice in order to address the Common Core:

- Students will be expected to explore below the surface of academic tasks.
- Students will be expected to construct knowledge within and across curricular areas.
- Students will be required to be able to explain their solutions and how they arrived at them verbally and in writing.

**FIGURE 1.1** Predictable Routines and Signals in the Classroom

Routine	Use	Benefit to English Language Learners
Morning sign-in	A way of taking roll and indicating lunch count.	Students feel a part of the class and that their presence is valued.
Set activity at the beginning of the school day	A way to engage students immediately. Such things as journal writing, reading library book; tasks such as watering plants, sharpening pencils are appropriate.	Students know what to do immediately. Have a chance to share their evening in writing, sign up to share journal entries, or chat briefly with peers and teacher.
Set place in the room where certain activities occur	Students move to certain areas for group lessons, review, sharing orally.	Students know what to expect when moved to a certain area.
A list of the day's activities and approximate times are posted in the same place each day	Helps students get their assignments in order and know which books to get out, when homework will be collected.	Students have a visual reminder of the day's activities; less reliance on oral directions.
Consistent use of modeling and contextualizing of oral directions	Helps students to follow directions.	Students waste less energy wondering what to do next.
Use of hand signals, light signals	Helps student to redirect their energies, know when activity changes are coming.	Students alerted to upcoming events, drawing to a close of activities and events.
Posting of assignments, page numbers, long-term assignments, homework	Helps students stay on task.	Students are aware of expectations.
Set place to submit assignments and get materials	Fosters reliability and self-reliance.	Students are aware of expectations.

All of these changes put additional stress on students learning to speak and write in English. For this reason, teachers are advised to provide training exercises from the beginning of the year so that all students are aware of the expectations.

## Step-by-Step

The steps in implementing predictable routines and signals are the following:

- **Set up your room**—Set up your room with certain areas designated for group activities, free reading, and partner work. Establish these areas with the students by **modeling** their use and asking questions like, “Will you work with other people in this area?” or “Where will you sit if you want to read a book by yourself?” Use your computer to create clear, legible, large-print signs and graphics to help guide students.

- **Establish routines**—Establish set places for students to turn in assignments; pick up needed materials; and keep their book bags, lunch boxes, and other personal belongings. Model putting these things in the established places.

- **Model routines**—Model each new routine as it is established and be careful to maintain the routines once they’ve been established. Anytime a student shows confusion about a classroom routine or expectation, determine if a set routine would lessen the student’s confusion.

- **Contextualize directions**—Be **consistent** about modeling as you give directions. For example, “Take out your math book” should be accompanied by your holding up the math book. “Open to page 21” should be modeled and *page 21* should be written on the board. Modeling, gestures, and demonstrations are all vital ways to **contextualize instructions**. Be consistent!

- **Evaluate your use of routines and procedures periodically to identify areas that can be improved**—Use the **self-evaluation rubric** shown in Figure 1.2 periodically to identify areas in which you can improve the use of routines and procedures in your classroom.

- **Assess to determine appropriate follow-up instruction**—When you are giving directions in the classroom, be aware of how easily your English learners respond. Note if they need

**FIGURE 1.2** Routines and Procedures Self-Evaluation Rubric

Beginning	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary
Establish routines and procedures for some activities.	Routines and procedures are established, and rarely changed.	Routines and procedures are established and changed when students are observed needing different or additional support.	Routines and procedures are established and changed when needed. The students are given periodic reviews. Areas of the classroom are labeled to support students' use of them.
Routines and procedures are explained orally.	Routines and procedures are explained orally and modeled.	Routines and procedures are explained orally and modeled, and visual supports are added. Teacher observation is used to determine when changes are needed.	Routines and procedures are explained, orally and modeled, and visual supports are used. Their use is observed and changes are made to improve student understanding and success. Student input is a part of the planning for change.

**FIGURE 1.3** Checklist for Observing Student Use of Classroom Routines and Signals

Names	Date	No Response	Watches Others Before Responding	Responds to Signal or Verbal Direction
<p><b>Suggested Interventions</b></p> <p>No response: assign a partner.</p> <p>Watches others: offer verbal encouragement.</p> <p>Responds appropriately: offer positive nonverbal acknowledgment.</p> <p>Establish a signal that indicates “I need help.”</p>				

to use visual cues by watching others before responding. You may want to use a simple checklist to focus your observations and keep track of the students’ progress in classroom participation. See Figure 1.3 for a sample checklist.

## Applications and Examples

Mr. Castle’s kindergarten students know exactly what to expect when he starts singing, “Time to clean up.” They immediately begin to put their materials away. They seem to shift into high gear when they see their teacher pick up a book and go to sit in the rocking chair. They all know its story time. They quickly clean up and go sit on the carpet. They love to hear Mr. Castle read stories.

Mr. Castle has a set of predictable routines and signals that he uses with his 5-year-olds. Using consistent and predictable routines is especially effective for his English learners. His students know that when the light on the overhead projector comes on, Mr. Castle wants them to quiet down. He has several songs that he sings to give them signals about changing activities and he always puts notices to go home on top of the bookshelf by the door. If Mr. Castle forgets to give out the notices, he hears from 20 youngsters, “You forgot to give us our notes!”

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Ms. Newsome teaches high school economics. A number of her students are English language learners so she has assigned study partners for them. Ms. Newsome uses a simple routine to signal to her students when an assignment can be done with the study partners. She writes the names of both partners on the top of the assignment page when she determines that the assignment can be done in collaboration. When she thinks that the assignment is one that her English language learners can handle on their own, she doesn't write the names on the assignment paper.

Ms. Newsome has established a set routine that also serves as a signal to her students for when collaborative work is acceptable. She also has some lessons that she records, and the English language learners are instructed to use the listening station to listen to the tape and follow the directions step-by-step. Her English language learners know when she wants them to move to the listening station because Ms. Newsome simply hands a tape to Joaquin, which signals that it is his job to go by and tap the others on the shoulder. Ms. Newsome doesn't have to say a word.

## Conclusion

Predictable routines and signals save a lot of time in the classroom because a short signal or standard routine lets the students know what is expected of them. Signals and routines also serve to lower students' anxiety and help them feel that they are fully participating in the classroom community, which is especially important for English learners.

### Examples of Approximation Behaviors Related to the TESOL Standards

*PreK–3 students will:*

- restate information given.
- give or ask for permission.

*4–8 students will:*

- follow directions from modeling.
- associate labeled realia with vocabulary.

*9–12 students will:*

- ask for information and clarification.
- negotiate solutions to problems.

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# | 2

# Total Physical Response and Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPR and TPRS)

## Integrating Movement into Language Acquisition

**Total physical response** (Asher, 1982, 2009) is an approach to second-language acquisition based on first-language acquisition research. In first-language acquisition, children listen and acquire receptive language before they attempt to speak, they develop understanding through moving their bodies, and they are not forced to speak until they are ready. Repetition and active involvement are vital for retention of new vocabulary (Nation, 2005).

In total physical response (TPR), the teacher gradually introduces commands, acting them out as she or he says them. Initially, the students respond by performing the actions as the teacher demonstrates them. Gradually, the teacher's demonstrations are removed and the students respond to the verbal commands only. Teaching classroom routines through total physical response helps students gain confidence in classroom participation (Díaz-Rico, 2013).

Further research in the practice of TPR (Seely & Romijn, 2006) has identified additional uses for this strategy beyond learning to follow basic vocabulary, directions, and procedures. Total physical response storytelling has been found to enhance fluency greatly. Language acquisition expert Stephen Krashen says, "TPR storytelling is much better than anything else out there" (quoted in Seely & Romijn 2006, p. 39).

### Step-by-Step

The steps in teaching a total physical response lesson are the following:

- **Choose vocabulary to physicalize**—Choose vocabulary that will be used in the classroom, such as verbal directions, colors, and parts of the body, and list the words that students

will need to know. Think of simple commands that can be given using the target vocabulary and that require a movement response such as “Stand up,” “Sit down,” “Touch your head,” or “Show me the red block.”

- **Introduce vocabulary gradually**—Introduce two or three commands at first. Give a **command** while demonstrating it physically. For example, “Stand up” is accompanied by standing up. Motion for the students to do it with you. Introduce the next command and demonstrate. After you have introduced three commands, randomly alternate them, still demonstrating and encouraging the students’ responses.

- **Drop the physical modeling**—After students have practiced the commands as you demonstrate them, and they appear to know what to do without waiting for your demonstration, drop the demonstration and encourage students to respond to the verbal commands.

- **Add additional commands**—Add new commands, but no more than three at a time. Always start with demonstrations as you introduce new commands, practice until the students appear to know what to do, and then drop the demonstrations.

- **Add additional responses**—Find new ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of the vocabulary being practiced—such as pointing to pictures, drawing pictures, taking turns demonstrating commands—to add practice and variety while the students are gaining confidence. Total physical response can be used as a part of many lessons, especially when you are reviewing concepts. View this video to see TPR being used in reviewing math concepts while practicing following English directions. As you watch, ask yourself:



- What other types of activities would lend themselves to the use of TPR?
- How does this activity format support English language learners?

- **Play games for additional practice**—Play a game, with a student volunteer giving the commands, once the students gain confidence. Gradually encourage new student volunteers to give the commands as they become comfortable speaking the words. Never force students to speak the commands. Wait until they are confident enough to volunteer.

- **Assess student progress and understanding**—Because students are responding to commands with physical movements, it is easy to document their progress. Make a checklist of the commands you have taught and keep track of the commands that students know automatically and those that still require modeling. Be sure to document when students volunteer to be leaders in the games being played for practice. Share the things you have documented with the students and celebrate together.

- **Periodically review your use of total physical response and plan to improve and expand your use of the strategy**—Use the self-evaluation rubric in Figure 2.1 (on next page) to determine your present level of implementation. Plan to improve your use of the strategy by adding the descriptors given at the next highest level.

## Step-by-Step for TPR Storytelling

- **Start with basic TPR**—Give a command and perform the corresponding action to demonstrate its meaning. Restate the command and have students move in response to it. Don’t expose students to more than three new words at a time.
- **Incorporate hand TPR**—Add the use of hand gestures or hand signs to represent words or concepts. Examples of **hand TPR** include a stroking motion to represent *cat* and raising hands and wiggling fingers as the hands are brought down to represent *rain*. These hand gestures can be combined with whole body TPR.
- **Ask some questions that can be answered with one word**—**Pantomime** putting a hat on your head, then ask, “What is on my head, a hat or a dog?” The students should respond, “*Hat*.” This step is to build vocabulary and student confidence in responding to

**FIGURE 2.1** Total Physical Response Self-Evaluation Rubric

Beginning	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary
TPR is used for demonstrating following directions and/or simple vocabulary.	TPR is used for teaching basic directions, simple vocabulary, and other words that students don't seem to understand (based on observation).	TPR is used for a variety of lessons whenever new vocabulary is introduced.	TPR is used for a variety of lessons with students of various English language development levels. New vocabulary, procedures, and sequence of actions are all frequently introduced using TPR.
TPR is used only for introductory lessons.	TPR is used for a variety of lessons. It may be used very briefly at times to introduce new procedures.	TPR is used almost daily for brief lessons, and whenever new vocabulary or procedures are introduced.	Students are encouraged to use TPR to demonstrate vocabulary and/or procedures to other students.

questions in English. Repeat this step several times to build vocabulary that you will use in future steps, telling a mini-story.

- **Start telling mini-stories and have students repeat them**—After you have introduced the vocabulary to be used in your mini-story, tell the story and have the students pantomime the words. For example, you may tell this mini-story after introducing and having the students use a combination of hand and whole body TPR for the words *I, ran, school, morning, raining, wet, and cold*.
  - I ran to school this morning because it was raining. I got very wet and cold.

The students should act out the words as you tell the story several times. If you have a student who can retell the story, ask him or her to retell it as the students continue to act it out.

- **Do not require students to repeat the words after the storyteller**—The students demonstrate their comprehension of the story by acting out the important words. Give them an opportunity to retell the story when they gain confidence to do so.
- **Teach the students to tell their own stories**—Encourage students to make up a simple story (two or three sentences) and teach the vocabulary using hand and whole body TPR. Work with students to help them identify vocabulary to teach and ways to make the vocabulary understood. Support their beginning efforts by writing the vocabulary words on the board. After a student tells a mini-story, encourage the other students to ask questions about the story that can be answered with gestures as well as verbally.
- **Continue to observe your students to determine when lessons should be repeated**—Observe your students during TPR and TPR storytelling to identify areas of confusion and document growth in vocabulary. Also document their willingness to participate in activities more often because this is a strong indicator of language development and confidence.

## Applications and Examples

Mr. Tong's kindergartners are learning the names of body parts. Because he has a number of English language learners in the class, Mr. Tong decides to use total physical response to support their understanding of the English names for the parts of the body. He begins the lesson by saying, "Point to your head," as he demonstrates. He motions for the students to join him in

touching their heads, and nods and smiles as they follow his lead. He then introduces, “Touch your chin,” as he demonstrates. He alternates the two commands for a few minutes and then adds, “Touch your nose.”

Mr. Tong repeats these three commands several times before he drops the demonstrations and gives just the verbal commands. He watches the students carefully as he drops the demonstrations to make sure that the students are still able to follow along. He continues this game for a few days, until the students respond to commands to touch or point to their head, chin, nose, ears, eyes, shoulders, feet, toes, knees, hands, arms, and elbows.

Mr. Tong changes games once he observes the students responding to verbal commands to identify each part of the body. The second game he plays with the students involves their understanding of the uses of the body parts. He adds this game to begin to address the Common Core standard for students to “identify real-life connections between words and their use.” Mr. Tong asks the students to point to the body parts according to their uses. For example:

What helps you see? What helps you hear? What helps you walk?

Mr. Tong notices that several of the students are using the names of the body parts in their oral communications in the classroom, so he plans a game that will involve students giving directions in English. Mr. Tong begins the game by demonstrating. He pairs the students and tells them to touch your heads, and he demonstrates with his partner. Then he tells them to touch your hands, demonstrating with his partner. He asks for a volunteer to give the directions and one child eagerly raises his hand. Mr. Tong gives up his partner to pair him with the volunteer child’s partner and helps the volunteer to demonstrate the commands as the student gives the directions and the others follow them. This game is played for a few minutes a day for about a week to give additional volunteers a chance to be the leader. Even the native English speakers enjoy playing.

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Ms. Lopez teaches seventh-grade science and she is concerned about safety with her students. She also wants to begin to address the Common Core science standard related to scientific procedures that students will “follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.” To make sure that everyone understands the safety procedures, she decides to teach them through a total physical response lesson. She introduces the terms *pitcher*, *beaker*, and *Bunsen burner*, and the directions “Tip the beaker” and “Pour carefully” at the beginning of the lesson with the burners turned off. She demonstrates exactly how to tip the beakers to make sure the liquid doesn’t splash as she says, “Tip the beaker slowly toward the pitcher and pour carefully.”

After she is sure that the students understand the terms and directions with the accompanying demonstration, she repeats the directions without demonstrating as she walks around the room.

Ms. Lopez observes the students as they practice transferring liquid from the pitcher to the beaker and placing the beaker into the holders, and she feels much more confident about their understanding of the safety precautions. The next day she plans to introduce the lighting of the burners and the procedures to be followed in case of an emergency. She will review today’s lesson before she introduces a new one, however.

## Conclusion

Although the total physical response strategy is generally used with young children or English language learners who have very little English knowledge, it can be used to introduce new procedures and vocabulary at almost any level. Figure 2.2 (on next page) shows many ways in which this strategy is effective.

Total physical response is an active learning approach for supporting comprehension in a low-anxiety atmosphere (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). For this reason, it is very popular with English language learners and teachers alike. Total physical response is also highly effective in teaching

**FIGURE 2.2** Applications for Total Physical Response

- Movement directions (stand up, sit down, line up, walk, run, kneel, hop, etc.)
- Students' names
- Color words
- Number words
- Shapes
- Body parts
- Prepositional phrases
- Directions (up, down, left, right, high, low, etc.)
- Classroom procedures
- Content vocabulary/picture sorts

vocabulary associated with **content-area knowledge**. Teachers can introduce vocabulary and have students respond by drawing, pointing, putting pictures in order, or any other physical response that encourages active involvement and verifies understanding.

TPR storytelling has been shown to support growing verbal fluency in English language learners (Seely & Romijn, 2006). Having students use hand gestures as well as whole body responses supports students in participation as they acquire English and maturity.

### Examples of Approximation Behaviors Related to the TESOL Standards

*PreK–3 students will:*

- observe and imitate motions of others.
- use practiced motion appropriately in class.

*4–8 students will:*

- use knowledge of the classroom setting to determine acceptable behavior.

- use observations to determine appropriate physical responses.

*9–12 students will:*

- observe and imitate the speech and actions appropriate in a particular situation.
- vary oral responses according to social settings.

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