

THIS IS TAKEN FROM EDU-COVID SERIES. THIS IS A SERIES SENT MONTHLY VIA O.R.B.I.T.S. NEWSLETTER TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR POST COVID SCHOOLS.

THIS DOCUMENT IS UPDATED MONTHLY AS PER EDU-COVID MONTHLY EDITIONS.



# Language Arts Insights

# Languages



\* This applies to all languages

- Language, no matter which one, is critical since it is the basis for all other subjects. English is the most common. Other subjects are communicated through languages. It is easier to teach languages in classes since Language Learners, such as ELLs, rely more on their body language for expression and teachers rely on that too. Whether on-site or online, ensure that you allow expression through body language.
- Four domains need to be focused upon the most since these constitute the whole language framework:
  1. Fluent Reading
  2. Comprehension
  3. Vocabulary
  4. Writing

It is important to see these as four separate wholes to ensure deep coverage of each and connect them simultaneously through the right, relevant tasks.



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- Early stages require decoding so that these early readers do not just guess the words or memorize the words and the illustrations. Using phonics combined with high-frequency words is essential to build up reading abilities. Teaching them to read without structural methods will not help learners, especially during these times when teachers are not always physically close by (online learning).
- To build sentences, “sentence frames” is an excellent tool since it bridges the gap between what the learner does or can do and the expected level.
- To enhance comprehension, include video read-alouds. There are videos with sound effects, making understanding easier. Examples are *Bri Reads*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJP45YX6-xg> , <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mTdP6prrs0> .
- Modeling fluent reading is essential.
- Novel study is essential to include in learning and exploring identities of learners and forms of behavior. They are unique in being lengthy, so learners incorporate a variety of skills, literary and critical skills. Since novels are stories, learners relate to them, making bridging easier and more exciting.
- Selecting the right novels is crucial so that engagement occurs, Identifying point of view and purpose are two 21<sup>st</sup> century highly recommended skills. Second comes aligning novels with informational texts, so that learners can tie to background knowledge and relevance.

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*Comprehension* is a fundamental skill set to learn. Strategies are important. However, focusing on reading should be the focus. Bringing in the knowledge into meaningful discourse can strengthen comprehension.

Asking questions is the first step after and during reading. There are always a voice and a message of the author. Knowing this builds a bridge towards full understanding.

Teacher read aloud is great in creating suspense and curiosity, as learners will attach more and more meaning until the full picture is formed.

Asking learners to underline or circle interesting information or information that is not yet clear directs understanding. Annotating is also powerful.

Creating a “Headline” or the “Aha” or any other phrase chosen to denote a main idea.

Drawing attention to the author. There can be no text without the author. Narrative writing is not only genre. Checking multiple types of genres and validating information are fundamental in comprehension.

Asking learners to pause and retell ensures deep learning.

Selecting characters and playing the role or redesigning the role-actions, reactions, decisions, etc.. extends learning.

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**Vocabulary** is another fundamental skill in learning languages. Teaching vocabulary, the old way, through definitions and writing sentences is not enough. Paragraph writing is a very good practice.

However, building those bridges towards more vocabulary from context and word banks for writing purposes requires certain strategies to help smooth the process out.

Focus on **content area vocabulary** is essential to solidify learning. Strategies that can be incorporated (shared with classmates) during home learning for this purpose:

- Word games
- Word Bank/Box (any shoe box at home can be used)
- Weekly Show and Tell using vocabulary (To avoid time constraints, it can be 1 minute long only and performed by 2 to 4 learners only)

Focus on **multiple-meaning words** is also essential. It can be connected to other subject matters as well.

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Putting learned language in real practice can be very helpful. Reading genres and texts for the sake of reading and comprehension only does not fulfill its cycle of extended learning- which should be the target.

Using **sentence stems or phrases** is a simple tool that teachers can use to start a speaking exercise or a writing task. These sentence stems can be provided by the teacher or even better, extracted from reading selections and written down in a special notepad to be a specific activity prompt (short-term) or like a word or phrase bank (long-term).

Sentence stems are a powerful cognitive tool because they:

- spur ideas
- help explore themes and plots
- solidify language through writing down the phrases
- reach out to passive learners
- trigger creative beginnings and endings (the unusual and unexpected)
- enhance engagement
- help gain self-confidence as the activity starts as a whole class, to pair work, then to individuals

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**Virtual tours** can be amazing prompts for discussions and writing tasks. During lockdowns and travel bans, using virtual tour platforms can create bridges and airports, moving learners from their rooms to a total new, fascinating world.

This serves to keep this sense of connection between the inside and the outside global world but can also provide a bountiful landscape to allocate descriptive words and phrases, weave storylines, and write or discuss culture, history, or human achievement.

These virtual tours can either be integrated in lessons as parts of the themes or can be separately weaved into extracurricular activities.

All these discussions and writing pieces can be shared through multifaceted ways. Most importantly, such tasks embody excitement, and this is what makes learning more solid and life-long.

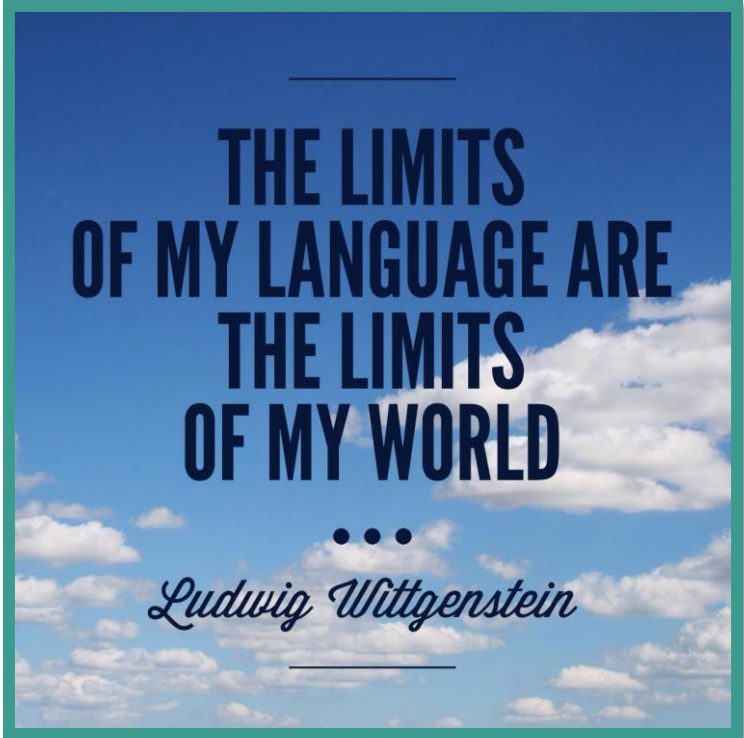
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**THE LIMITS  
OF MY LANGUAGE ARE  
THE LIMITS  
OF MY WORLD**

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*Ludwig Wittgenstein*