

Beyond the Language Barrier



Recommendations for Teachers

Practical ways to encourage **ESL students** to challenge themselves and succeed in advanced courses.

1. BUILD RELATIONSHIPS & BELONGING  Get to know your ESL students. Learn about their background, interests, and goals.  Create a welcoming classroom environment. ESL students are more willing to take risks when they feel seen and supported.  Build trust and show you care. Strong relationships increase confidence and motivation.	2. SET HIGH EXPECTATIONS  Encourage, don't limit. Invite qualified ESL students into advanced courses.  Share success stories. Highlight former ESL students who succeeded in AP and beyond.  Use positive, belief-driven language. Remind students: "You belong here. You can do this."	3. MAKE INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE  Explain the system clearly. Help students and families understand GPA, credits, prerequisites, and graduation requirements.  Guide course selection. Explain the benefits of AP, dual credit, and advanced pathways.  Share opportunities early. Don't assume students know what options exist—tell them!
4. SCAFFOLD FOR SUCCESS  Use language supports. Provide visuals, sentence frames, word banks, and graphic organizers.  Break tasks into steps. Chunk assignments and provide clear instructions.  Check for understanding often. Use quick checks, think-pair-share, and ask students to explain in their own words.  Be flexible with time when needed. Allow extra processing time as students build confidence and skills.	5. PREPARE & EMPOWER  Provide exam readiness support. Offer practice with AP-style questions and test-taking strategies.  Teach growth mindset. Help students understand that effort leads to growth and mistakes are part of learning.  Celebrate small wins. Recognize progress, not just perfection.  Encourage peer connections. Peer support and study groups reduce anxiety and build confidence.	
6. ENGAGE FAMILIES  Communicate in families' home language when possible. Provide translations and clear, simple information.  Invite families into the process. Encourage questions and explain how they can support their student.  Partner to support goals. When schools and families work together, students thrive.	7. CONTINUE SUPPORT BEYOND RECLASSIFICATION  Remember that support shouldn't stop. Former ESL students may still need guidance and encouragement.  Monitor and check in. Keep an eye on progress and well-being.  Keep doors open. Let students know you are still a resource.	

8. KEY TAKEAWAY



Your belief, support, and guidance can change the trajectory of an ESL student's future.
When ESL students feel informed, supported, and challenged, they gain the confidence to take on advanced courses and achieve their goals.





You have the power to open doors.
Encourage. Empower. Believe in them—because they can.

Beyond the Language Barrier