

For classes that are longer than 30 minutes, teachers can add the Extend activities to lengthen the teaching time. For short class times, each activity within a lesson can form its own session. The activities involve students working individually, in pairs, and small groups, though most activities can be adapted for small or large class sizes or when students' proficiency or age makes it difficult. For example, small classes can do small group activities in pairs. For classes with many newcomers or kindergarten students, whole group activities led by the teacher may provide better structure than pair or small group activities. Activities can also be skipped in favor of focusing on activities best suited to student needs. For example, doing Activity 1 and the Extend activity for a particular lesson may be better for students than doing Activity 2.

The flex lessons offer further opportunities for changing the program to meet local needs and priorities, allowing any theme to be extended and deepened as needed. Students at all levels of ability can benefit from doing the Capstone and EnglishMat activities since they can be easily modified to increase or decrease the difficulty. Some Capstone Projects take more time and could be skipped if time is short, whereas others can be done in just a couple lessons. The EnglishMats offer great opportunities for building basic literacy and writing skills or for developing creative writing ability.

Mixed Proficiency Levels in the Classroom: Leveling Up and Down

Leveling up and down refers to differentiation—the practice of adapting lessons and activities to the level of the learners. Students can come and go during the school year and consequently arrive with different levels of proficiency than other students. Likewise, students may progress at a different pace from one another. Teachers are then faced with the daunting task of meeting all students' needs at the same time. Below are some common sense guidelines for working with students of differing abilities. Advice for specific activities is provided in the lessons when these general guidelines are not adequate.

Leveling Up:

- Convert simple sentences (*I like to run.*) into more complex ones: by adding prepositional phrases (*I like to run in the park.*), adjectives (*I like to run in the big park.*), or adverbs (*I like to run fast in the park.*), or by adding independent (*I like to run because it's fun.*) or dependent clauses (*When it's cold, I like to run.*)
- Have more fluent students lead activities or "play teacher" after you model an activity to help keep them engaged.
- Ask more complex, higher order questions instead of simple literal questions (*Why did the woman decide to help the little bat? versus What did the little bat like to eat?*).
- Have students retell different parts of a story after it is read aloud or ask them to embellish a story using the illustrations to provide more details.
- Have students ask and answer additional questions beyond the structure(s) that is/are being targeted.
- Increase the complexity of oral directions by giving 2- and/or 3-step directions without pausing.
- During *Work With Text* activities, have students read the comprehension questions aloud themselves and always ask follow up questions to encourage students to justify their answers with evidence.
- Have students write additional or more complex sentences than the activity requires.

↓ Leveling Down:

- Allow students to point to images, hold up Student Cards, or respond to prompts physically instead of orally.
- If the class is at a very low proficiency level, use whole group activities with physical actions and choral repetition instead of pair or small group activities.
- Model how to respond to questions by asking a question and then providing the beginning of the targeted sentence structure when eliciting the response (*Where are you going? I am going ...*).
- Simplify the complexity of the targeted structure to something more familiar if students struggle with new content or vocabulary words.
- Give one direction at a time, pausing to let students complete one action or task before giving another direction.
- Increase the amount of time teaching vocabulary. Provide more opportunities for practice through play.
- Decrease the amount of vocabulary that is introduced or reviewed in a lesson.
- Make a set of word cards to go with the Student Cards and have students match the words and pictures by playing vocabulary games, such as Bingo, Fly Swatter, Concentration, and Go Fish*.
- Add drawings to illustrate unfamiliar words on anchor charts or other teacher-created materials.
- Have students copy words from an anchor chart to help them begin to write down their thoughts.
- Have students write new vocabulary words in personalized word and picture dictionaries, where they can alphabetize the words by first letter.

Adapting for Different Grade Levels

There can be so many differences between children ages 4-7, in terms of literacy, cognitive growth, and oral language, among other things. Students in kindergarten and first grade may lack literacy skills in their first language and in English. Many students will not be able to read the words or sentence frames when they enter this program as beginners in part because of their age. Younger students may go through a silent period in which they do not respond verbally in any language, which will make it difficult for them to participate in interactive tasks or show much evidence of engagement. Their proficiency level may also contribute to problems engaging in tasks. Here are some tips for working with students who have little to no literacy skills or who are not verbal yet.

- Focus on whole class work rather than pair or small group work. For example, instead of having students work in pairs to practice language with frames, have them respond as a group in a choral response.
- Provide the beginning of a sentence and have students complete the sentence orally with a word or phrase. If they are unable to do that, have them point to or hold up vocabulary picture cards. For vocabulary questions, have students choose the correct answer from two alternatives that you provide.
- Do whole class writing activities, in which students provide responses, you write the responses on the board, and they copy the words, phrases, or sentences.
- Although students may not be able to read, continue to use the frames to reinforce concepts of print, underlining words with your fingers as you read them.

*To play Go Fish, make a card deck out of the words and pictures, give each player 3-5 cards, and put the remaining cards face down in the middle. Students take turns asking each other if they have a card and say *Go Fish* if they don't have it. Then the "asking" student has to pick up a card, and the next student takes a turn. Students match up as many pairs of words and pictures as possible. The winner is the first student to run out of cards.