



4B. STRUCTURE THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT TO PROMOTE POSITIVE PEER INTERACTIONS AND POSITIVE SELF-ESTEEM, TO ENSURE THAT EACH STUDENT IS A VALUED PARTICIPANT IN AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY.

Incorporating ESL Students into the Classroom



The classroom environment should feel safe while also being inviting to all students. It can especially be difficult for students who may only speak English as a second language or arrive in the middle of the school year. No matter the case, it is the teacher's responsibility to make sure that all students feel welcomed into any environment and explain to all students beforehand that a new student is arriving and may need more assistance. This will help to pro-

mote positive peer interactions among students while also alleviating some of the stress that these students have when entering an uncomfortable or unknown situation. This will make every student feel as if they are valued for what they bring and the variety of student backgrounds that are inevitable in every single classroom. There are many ESL websites and strategies that teachers can implement into the classroom so that students will have a sense of normalcy. Students and

ESL teachers alike need to be able to ensure that the classroom environment is a place that is welcoming for any student, no matter the background, race, or ethnicity of any student. There are methods and ways to make sure every student feels that they are receiving the best education possible, with no type of barrier or problem due to where the student has come



Personal Insight

In the classroom that I am currently student teaching in, a student who began at the beginning of the year had a relative come in at the beginning of January from Iraq. The girl who had been there for the entirety of the year thus far was adapting well to learning English and was thriving in the classroom. However, her relative did not know any English when she arrived. The first day seemed very nerve-racking for her and she did not speak a word. While it was helpful to have her relative in the room who knew her native language, this student was be-

ginning to lose the language and at times would not be able to translate what her relative was asking for. My teacher ended up having the opportunity to attend an ESL conference in which they offered a lot of ideas regarding how to make these students feel more welcome into the classroom. A few weeks after this student had arrived and she began to receive extra language help outside of the classroom, we began to label the room so that we could point to it whenever we would give directions and she would begin to associate the

words we were saying with the words that were placed around the room. We would draw a lot of pictures in the hopes that she would recognize that compared to the words around the room for certain things. These strategies not only helped her, but it also helped the other students who may have had that language barrier with her at times. It is evident that these simple strategies have helped her to continue to prosper in the classroom as an ESL student.