**ESL and Special Education Strategies**

 Darhleen Nelson

**ESL Strategies:**

**Find Someone Who**

This activity involves learners by asking them to try to find someone in the class who matches a description or knows certain information.  It can be used to practice new vocabulary, to activate background knowledge, or to review concepts.  You can also use it as a “getting to know you” activity to build community in the classroom. Students enjoy the mobility and sociability of the strategy.

#### How to Use:

**1. P**repare 10 to 20 “Find Someone Who” statements using vocabulary or concepts that relate to your current unit of study. For example, if you are teaching a unit on medieval culture, “Find someone who can list three types of jobs a serf might have;” “Find someone who has seen a movie set in medieval times;” “Find someone who has can sketch the feudal pyramid.” Create a variety of statements so that it will be easy to ﬁnd a person with some characteristics but not so easy to find others.  You can use a bingo-card format or checklist.

**2.** Announce that the class is going to do a brief interview activity in which students will ask each other questions.  The goal is to ask everyone in class until students ﬁnd someone who does that activity, has that characteristic, or can answer the question. Pass out the bingo sheet or checklist to each student.  Review the sheet and answer any questions.  Instruct students to ﬁnd someone who can answer one of their questions or say “yes” to one of the descriptions.  They should write that person’s name on their checklist sheet and go on to the next question with another person.  Important: A student can write a person’s name only once.
**3.** Ask everyone to stand up and begin the activity for a set amount of time.  You may want to provide a prize to the first student to complete the chart or, if you decide to use the activity to play Bingo, the first person to get five in a row.

#### When to Use:

* At the beginning of a lesson to review or introduce material
* As a review game for a unit or chapter
* To practice asking and answering questions in an ESL or foreign language setting
* For practice using vocabulary in a unit of study

#### Variations:

**Icebreaker:** You can use Find Someone Who as a way for students to learn names and something personal about their fellow classmates. Fill in the checklist or bingo card with statements about sports, pastimes, music groups, TV shows, foods, movies, pets, siblings, places in the community where students like to hang out, etc.

**Jigsaw:** After completing Find Someone Who, each student will be in charge of orally explaining, creating a visual representation, and/or writing about one of the topics/questions that they said they know about. They can present it to the class, smaller groups, or just to a partner. Important: the teacher should make sure that each student has a DIFFERENT topic/question.

**Partner Up!** Use this variation of Find Someone Who to form student partners and review content you've just taught. Create cards with information that students have to match up -- for example, words and definitions. Give one card to each student. To find a partner for a new activity, students have to find a match for their card.

# Frayer Model

The Frayer Model is a graphic organizer for building student vocabulary. This technique requires students to define target vocabulary and apply their knowledge by generating examples and non-examples, giving characteristics, and/or drawing a picture to illustrate the meaning of the word. This information is placed on a chart that is divided into four sections to provide a visual representation for students.

#### How to Use:

**1.**  Pre-select key vocabulary words and make copies of graphic organizer.

**2.** Provide copies of the Frayer Model graphic organizer to students and explain the process.

**3.** Show the Frayer graphic organizer to the class and explain each of the sections. Use a common vocabulary word to demonstrate the various components of the form.  Model the type and quality of desired answers when giving this example.

**4.** Divide the class into student pairs. Assign each pair one of the key concepts and have them complete the four-square organizer for this concept. Or, assign each student one word to work on alone.

**5.** Ask students or student pairs to share their conclusions with the entire class. Use these presentations to review the entire list of key concepts.

**6.** Make copies of each Frayer graphic organizer so every student has a copy of all key concepts to use for review. OR display completed Frayer graphic organizers on a “Vocabulary Wall” for student reference.

**7.** Extend or deepen students’ thinking by asking students to:
• Describe the rationale for examples and non-examples
• Asking students to use the Frayer Model as a note taking strategy during reading.
• Asking students to change the titles of the boxes to include concept development categories.

#### When to Use:

• develop understanding of key concepts and vocabulary.
• draw on prior knowledge to make connections among concepts.
• compare attributes and examples.
• think critically to find relationships between concepts and to develop deeper
• understanding of word meanings
• make visual connections and personal associations.
• review key vocabulary before a test or quiz
• create a “vocabulary wall” for quick reference of word meanings

#### Variations:

**Elements of a Typical Frayer Model:** A typical Frayer “4-square” model includes the following elements:
• Definition (either from teacher or in student’s own words
• Examples
• Non-examples
• Characteristics or illustration of concept

**Alternate Elements of Frayer Model- Example 1:** Vary this typical model by changing the 4 elements to:
• Examples
• Non-examples
• Essential Characteristics
• Non-essential characteristics

**Alternate Elements of Frayer Model- Example 2:** Give students a Frayer model with all the squares filled in and ask students to guess the vocabulary word.

# Card Sort

This strategy gives students the opportunity to work with vocabulary, terms, and concepts. Students sort cards with the terms and concepts into categories based on meaning. Sorting the cards gives students a structure to talk meaningfully with one another about content and helps teachers check for understanding.

#### How to Use:

**1.** Decide which concepts or terms you want students to learn from the current unit of study and prepare cards with the name of each concept or term. Make enough sets of cards for pairs or trios to use.

**2.** Have the students sort the cards into meaningful groups or matches. Model the conversation students will have with one another to determine how to sort their cards or how to match them.

**3.** Discuss the categories or matches. Ask groups to explain how they decided to sort their cards.

#### When to Use:

* Before beginning a new assignment to test prior knowledge
* After introducing new vocabulary
* After learning about categories and classification
* When a unit is completed to review concepts and terms

#### Variations:

**Concept Sort:** Ask students to group terms or concepts into piles and have them write the name of the category or relationship on a blank card to be placed on top of each pile.

**Resort:** Ask students to sort the cards various times (2-3) in the same sitting and make different connections and categories for the terms/concepts. They should write the names of the new categories or relationships on blank cards to be placed on top of the differently sorted piles.

**Special Education Strategies**

# Popsicle Sticks

This discussion technique ensures that all students have an equal opportunity to participate and share their responses in class. The randomness of drawing a student’s name using the Popsicle Sticks method also helps with classroom management.

#### How to Use:

**1.** Make a Popsicle Stick for each student by writing each name on a popsicle stick.  Use a cup or mug to hold the Popsicle Sticks for the entire class. If you assign each student in the class a number, you could put a number on each popsicle stick instead of a name.

**2.** After posing a question to the class, draw a stick out of the cup. The person whose name or number you’ve drawn will answer the question. If he or she wants more help or support on the question, draw another stick. Then, the initial student must repeat what the second student said (assuming the second student gave the correct answer), so that the initial student is unable to “opt-out” of answering.

#### When to Use:

* Ask interest questions before introducing new material to tap into prior knowledge
* Randomly call on students to gauge understanding during or after a lesson
* Assign groups or tasks
* Decide who will receive a special privilege

#### Variations:

**Make Your Own Popsicle Stick:** Have students create and decorate their own popsicle stick.

**Name Generator:** An online name generator can create the same effect as Popsicle Sticks.  Here is an example of one to try:  <http://classtools.net/education-games-php/fruit_machine/>

**Popsicle Stick App:** Apple has an app for the iPad called Stick Pick that functions like Popsicle Sticks in your classroom – with some neat additions to the functionality! <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/stick-pick/id436682059?mt=8>

**I'm Done:** Create an “I’m Done Cup” for students to choose from when they finish early.  Sticks in this jar would be labeled with a variety of tasks students can do, for example: write a letter to a teacher, read a book, write a picture book, practice spelling, work with math flash cards, study vocabulary, etc.

# Graphic Organizers

Graphic Organizers are useful educational tools in any subject area. They help students organize their thoughts and ideas for answering questions, function as a pre-writing tool for essays, and provide a visual display of information. They can be an easy way to differentiate instruction for a variety of learning styles as well.

#### How to Use:

**1.** Teach students how to use the graphic organizer you’ve chosen for the activity.  Explicitly explain the situations in which certain Graphic Organizers are used and why they are effective for use at those times.

**2.** Give students time to practice using various Graphic Organizers. While one student may find T-charts especially helpful, another student might prefer Venn diagrams.

**3.** After exposing your students to several different types of Graphic Organizers and showing them the proper ways to use these organizers, you’ve given them a chance to find a new tool that they can use on their own for future projects.

#### When to Use:

* When taking notes about new information in a lesson to organize ideas
* After reading a book to organize the plot
* When comparing two concepts
* To help students classify new information into meaningful categories
* To help students find similarities and differences by creating analogies
* As a brainstorming tool to generate ideas before students begin an assignment, such as a writing task, a set of word problems, or a lab, to gather ideas or formalize procedures

#### Variations:

**Other graphic organizers:** Try these web sites for other graphic organizers that can be used for all age groups:

<http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/>

<http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/graphic_organizers.htm>

<http://www.thinkingmaps.org/>

<http://www.scoe.org/files/AH_maps.pdf>

# Logbooks

A logbook is a way to record and keep track of events in your classroom. Log books are important classroom management tools that can be used in a variety of ways such as recording tardy students entering the classroom, communication with students’ parents, and student-teacher conferences. Some log books may be used by the students, whereas others are for use by the teacher only.

#### How to Use:

**1.** There are many different types of logbooks. An Attendance Logbook can be used in order to keep track of tardies and absences, whereas a Parent Communication Logbook can be used to record contact with parents. Determine the logbooks that will best suit the needs of your classroom.

**2.** Be sure that the Logbook is set up and organized for consistent use. Many teachers keep one logbook with tabs for items that students record (tardies, bathroom trips, make-up work) and another logbook with tabs for teacher use only.

**3.** The most important step is to record data consistently. When students are in charge of recording data (in a tardy book or make-up log, for example), be sure to teach students exactly what and when to write in the books and do periodic spot-checks to be sure information is accurate.

#### When to Use:

Logbooks can be set up at any time of the year when a need is identified. If the log is one that students will use, they must be taught how and when to use it.

#### Variations:

**Tutorials Logbook:** A logbook can be used to record when students attend tutorials, including before and after school as well as lunch tutorials.

**Discipline Logbook:** Record discipline steps taken with each student in a logbook. Items that can be recorded: re-directs in the classroom, student-teacher conferences, phone calls to parents, referrals or contact with administration.

**Classroom Visitor Logbook:** Keep track of visitors in the classroom, including parents, other teachers, administrators, Special Education staff, etc. Visitors sign the log book with the times they enter and leave the classroom. For elementary students, this could be an opportunity for student participation and even added as a classroom job.

# Non-Verbal Signals

Non-verbal signals may be used as a form of communication between teacher and students. Students can communicate a need, such as using the restroom, without verbally asking or interrupting the discussion. Signals allow the teacher to immediately know what the student needs, rather than stopping to respond to a general hand raised in the air. Teachers can also use non-verbal signals to reply to student requests and to emphasize actions that students need to perform.

#### How to Use:

**1.** Determine the non-verbal signals that you would like to implement in your classroom. Depending on the age of the students, it’s recommended that only a few are used so that students are not overwhelmed or confused. Commonly used student signals include using an agreed-upon number of fingers for using the restroom, for sharpening a pencil, and for drinking water. Commonly used teacher signals include nodding the head for “yes,” shaking the head for “no,” pointing the index finger for “go ahead” and holding up an open hand for “wait”.

**2.** Create a sign or poster that displays an example of the signal as well as what the signal should be used for. Display the signs or posters in the classroom where they can always be seen and can serve as a reminder to students.

**3. T**each these non-verbal signals with the beginning of the year classroom procedures. Be sure to review them frequently until students are using them consistently.

#### When to Use:

Student and teacher signals can be taught to students at the beginning of the school year and used throughout the entire year. It is best to re-teach signals upon returning to school from an extended break, such as winter break or spring break. These non-verbal signals are most beneficial during a class discussion or while the teacher is talking, so as not to disturb the rest of the class.

#### Variations:

**Other Teacher Signals:** Using teacher signals is a less-intrusive deterrent technique to get students on track with what they should be doing. Students who might protest an oral request often respond more readily to a hand signal. Signals used by the teacher may include pointing to his or her eyes and then to the student’s paper in order to communicate “eyes on your paper.” The teacher may use his or her hands in a book formation to signal “open your book.” Many teachers also mime writing to indicate “you should be writing.”

**Attention Signal:** One of the most powerful non-verbal tools is a specific hand signal used by the teacher to gain the attention of the entire class.

References: http://www.the teachertoolkit.com/