Spanish/English Classroom Strategies

Accelerated Reader and ELLs

Renaissance Accelerated Reader® promotes reading growth in all students, but it is especially effective with English language learners for the following reasons:

- It encourages large amounts of reading practice, which builds background knowledge and reading endurance.
- It enables individualization so that every student reads at an appropriate level and learns vocabulary at an optimum pace.
- It verifies comprehension—our research shows that *all* students make the most reading gains when they average 85 percent on quizzes.
- It provides a constant stream of data that can be used for monitoring, guidance, and intervention.
- It gets students excited about reading, which is fundamental to success in school.

Prepare

- Familiarize yourself with Accelerated Reader software. Set the TOPS Report Language preference, which is an individual student setting. Choose "Always English," "Always Spanish," or "Ask the Student."
- Schedule reading practice time. We recommend at least 35 minutes a day of reading practice, if possible.
- Determine each student's reading level in both English and Spanish. Use formal assessments such as Renaissance Star Reading® and Renaissance Star Reading Spanish™, or do an informal assessment to find a starting point.
- Take inventory of your library collection. When purchasing new titles, it's important to base purchases on student performance (IRL for Spanish, and ZPD for English), not on grade in school.
- Use the advanced search option in Renaissance Accelerated Reader Bookfinder™ to find English and Spanish titles by book level.
- Label books for which you have an Accelerated Reader Reading Practice Quiz with quiz number, book level, interest level, and point value. (Most of the time, English and Spanish quizzes for the same book have the same quiz number.)

Get Started

- Read an Accelerated Reader book (Spanish or English or one of each) aloud to your class and demonstrate how to take Reading Practice Quizzes on the computer. Show them the dual-language capabilities of the program.
- Teach students how to select books within their ZPD.
- Schedule goal-setting meetings with students who are established readers in at least one language. Use the ZPD from the English version of Star Reading as the baseline when setting initial book-level goals for ELLs. When you know students are performing significantly higher in Spanish, stretch the higher end of the ZPD range and encourage them to select Spanish text at the higher end and English text at the lower end. See our Goal-Setting Chart for guidelines.
- Present a power lesson on the Student Reading Log, which can be printed from the software in English or Spanish. Project the form on a whiteboard and explain to students how they will fill it out.
- Check in with students every day to monitor their progress, guide book selection, and reinforce achievement. Review Student Reading Logs and TOPS Reports and have brief conversations with students to see how they are doing. Use the Daily Check-In Record Sheet to keep track of which students you have spoken with.
- Begin using simple motivational techniques in your classroom, such as book discussions, book displays, and a bulletin board that highlights student achievement of individual goals.
- Set Accelerated Reader preferences to enable the TOPS Report to print for both passed and failed Reading Practice Quizzes. Decide whether to have the report print in English or Spanish.
- Intervene at the first sign of difficulty. Adjust book levels or point goals as needed, and help students find books with which they will be successful.
- Print the Diagnostic Report weekly. You can choose to view results for Spanish quizzes only, English quizzes only, or both. Look for diagnostic codes, which alert you to students having trouble.