I implement EL practices to make me a clearer teacher who is more connected to his students. I recognize that all students, not just EL students, can benefit from having something explained in a different way. EL practices also allow me to learn about my students’ culture and to demonstrate my care regarding their background. Students love it when they can share their experiences with me and the class. By opening these dialogues, between EL students and myself, we gain a deeper understanding of social studies.

Riley Kehn, High School

Knowing that our EL students have to put so much extra effort into their learning is what drives me to make sure that I am giving them the tools to be successful. An EL student has to do double the work of other students. They must mentally translate the new information into their native language, think about the response, then mentally translate that back into English in order to respond. On top of that, if they haven’t already learned the academic language in their native language that just adds another layer of work they have to put in. I am impressed by the dedication our EL students display in their learning.

Melanie Hall, Middle School

By creating a supportive learning environment, my EL learners feel respected and safe to focus on their learning. In my classroom, EL learners engage in collaborative activities with their peers that take them out of the textbook, and into conversations and projects that give them opportunities to share their culture and language. While at the same time, they learn the background knowledge, and vocabulary that they need to be successful at school.

Pam Alexander, Elementary School