



Idaho Department
of Education

Resources & Tools for Supporting Newcomer & Immigrant Students

Maria Puga – English Learner Program
Coordinator





English Learner Defined

English Learner / Multilingual Learner

- Age 3-21
- Not born in any US State
- Primary or home language other than English
- Developing English needed for grade level academic content

Immigrant Student

- Age 3-21
- Born outside any US State
- Within first 36 months in US schools
- English proficient or may not be proficient

Newcomer

- K-12 student
- Born outside the USA
- Within the last three school years
- Still learning English

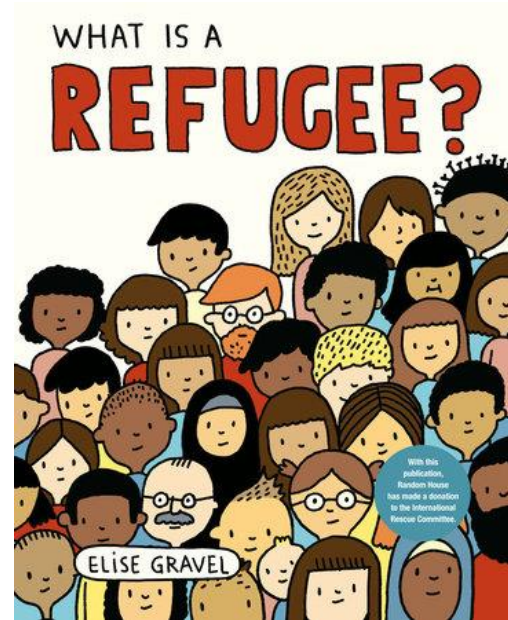
Refugee

- A person forced to leave their country
- Escape war, persecution, or natural disaster

Supporting our Students

Think – Pair – Share

How does each designation affect our students and their ability to show up fully in our school community?





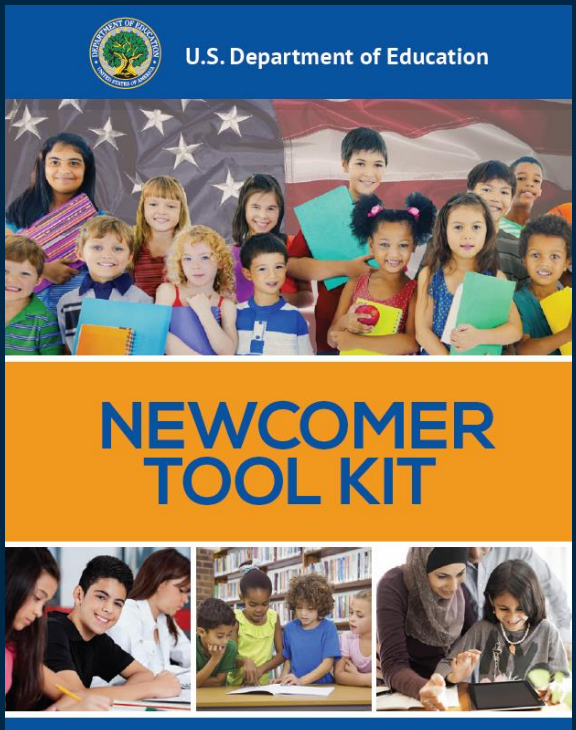
NCELA

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition

The Newcomer Toolkit is designed to help U.S. educators and staff who work directly with immigrant students – including refugees – and their families

Five Chapters:

- Who Are Our Newcomers?
- Welcoming Newcomers to a Safe and Thriving School Environment
- Supporting Newcomers' Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs
- Providing High-Quality Instruction for Newcomer Students
- Establishing Partnerships with Families





Accessing Newcomer Toolkit



U.S. Department of Education



NEWCOMER TOOL KIT





Six Key Principles to Encourage High-Quality Instruction for ELs

1. Instruction focuses on providing ELs with opportunities to engage in discipline-specific practices, which are designed to build **conceptual understanding** and **language competence** in tandem
2. Instruction leverages ELs home language(s), cultural assets, and **prior knowledge**
3. Standards-aligned instruction for ELs is **rigorous, grade-level appropriate**, and provides deliberate and appropriate **scaffolds**



Six Key Principles to Encourage High-Quality Instruction for ELs (Continued)

4. Instruction moves ELs forward by taking into account their English proficiency level(s) and prior schooling experience
5. Instruction fosters ELs autonomy by equipping them with strategies necessary to comprehend and **use language** in a variety of **academic settings**
6. Diagnostic tools and **formative assessment** practices are employed to measure students' content knowledge, academic language competence, and participation in disciplinary practices



Common Misconceptions About Newcomers #1

Newcomers must develop significant language proficiency prior to participating in disciplinary learning.

- Students learn language to do things in the world.
- Orient students to different types of texts they use in school
- How language is used in each content area
- Focus on how students use key phrases associated with the type of text
- Convey meaning about the content through written, oral, visual, and symbolic texts
- Move away from a focus on errors (such as verb tense and pronunciation)



Common Misconceptions About Newcomers #2

Students need simplified content and language as they learn English.

- Simplified language decreases, rather than increases, meaning.
- Develop connections between sentences and paragraphs to help students navigate a text.
 - Example: Identify text that contains **illustrative examples** and connections in both sentences and paragraphs. These include **embedding definitions**, **repeating** and **rewording key terms**, and adding connections between sentences and paragraphs.



Common Misconceptions About Newcomers #3

Students can learn only one language at a time, and bilingualism is counterproductive. Use of a student's home language will negatively affect academic and language learning.

- Literacy in a student's first language positively affects the learning of a new language
- Develop programs in which the student's first language supports learning a new language such as bilingual or dual language programs and classes
- Help students learn English by using the home language as a tool for learning English and academic content



Common Misconceptions About Newcomers #4

Not all educators working with ELs or newcomers need to be specially trained. If teachers speak English, they can teach English.

- Teachers need specialized knowledge to teach English and academic content to ELs, and to support the other needs of newcomers.
- Without pedagogical and socio-emotional supports for newcomers and ELs in particular, we will fail to support the attainment of ambitious futures by these students.



Professional Development Opportunities

- New Americans in the Classroom (Neighbors United / Idaho Office for Refugees)
- Go to Strategies (Idaho Department of Education)
- Newcomer Instructional Supports (Idaho Department of Education)
- Idaho Association for Bilingual Education Conference
- National Association for Bilingual Education Conference
- WIDA Self-Paced Modules
- WIDA Conference
- Summer English Learner Institute (Idaho Department of Education)



Key Elements of High-Quality Educational Programs for Newcomers

- Clear mission of excellence in the education of newcomers that values positive contributions to the school and community that newcomers bring
- Rich learning opportunities for newcomers that are rigorous and include grade-level content and literacy learning in English and newcomers' home languages whenever possible
- Agreed-upon educational pathways for students that promote coherence across grade levels or school settings
- School adults directly supporting students' education and socio-emotional well-being, agency, and autonomy
- Regular check-ins with students, and efforts to connect families with needed services
- Program with an asset orientation that values newcomers' home languages, cultures, families, and experiences
- Educators and staff who focus on continuous improvement of the core academic program with the goal of integrating rigorous academic and language learning to nurture and ripen newcomer students' potential



“Teach Me” – Group Activity

Presence of a feature of high-quality instruction for newcomers

Presence of a misconception about the education of newcomers



Reflection

- Where does your district/school stand on an asset vs. deficit approach to teaching newcomers?
- What are some areas where your district/school is succeeding?
- Where are some areas for improvement?

INCLUDE NEWCOMERS IN CLASS LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES

TIPS FOR INCLUDING NEWCOMERS

- set clear objectives
- model expectations
- buddy them up
WITH STRONG/HELPEFUL STUDENTS
- use L1 supports
- provide scaffolds
- modify output
- focus on what students CAN DO

REASONS WHY IT'S BEST PRACTICE

Students are ...

- listening, observing,
- making connections,
- building relationships,
- feeling included, building self-confidence, being exposed to content & vocabulary AND learning.



Closing Remarks

- Newcomers are a diverse set of students! They bring a wealth of knowledge, language, and culture.
- Our main goal should be to create language-rich classrooms with high expectations for ALL students
- Shared responsibility of all educators and staff





Idaho Department
of Education

Thank You!

Maria Puga

English Learner Program Coordinator

(208) 332-6905

mpuga@sde.idaho.gov