

Working with English Language Learners (ELLs): Notes for all Content Teachers

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Knowing your ELLs

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Changing Demographics:

- Between 1981 and 1990 more than 7.3 million people immigrated to the U.S. (63% increase from previous decade)
- Today nearly 1/5 of Americans live in household where language other than English is spoken
- 2.1 million public school students are classified as ELLs (tripled between 1980s and 1990s)

Knowing your ELLs

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- “As cultural and linguistic diversity in our schools increases arithmetically, the challenge to education increases . . . exponentially”(Garcia, 2002, pp. 6-7).
- “To honor diversity is to honor the social complexity in which we live – to give the individual and the culture in which that person developed a sense of integrity. To unify is absolutely necessary, but to insist on unity without embracing diversity is to destroy that which will allow us to unite – our individual and cultural dignity”(Garcia, 2002, p. 4).