

To ensure the academic achievement of English learners, a comprehensive approach for developing English proficiency is essential. Integral to such an approach is explicit language instruction in every class, every day.

Constructing Meaning provides teachers with the process and tools for weaving explicit language instruction into content area teaching. Lesson planning is driven by the content and academic language demands of discipline-specific learning. Based on backward design and a gradual release of responsibility model, the Constructing Meaning process prompts teachers to:

- understand the role language plays in content learning
- decide what language knowledge students need to access content and express understanding
- provide appropriate, explicit oral and written language instruction and practice

The Common Core and other content standards assume native English proficiency. Constructing Meaning offers an accelerated approach to instruction that emphasizes both academic English and critical literacy skills, thereby supporting English learners in acquiring the analytical language necessary to meet the demands of the Common Core. As students move through their academic careers, they must continually build their content knowledge and academic language foundation to be prepared to meet the increasing demands of each grade level.

Critical research-based features of Constructing Meaning instruction

- Promotes learning goals that include both **content and language objectives**.
- Uses a **functional language approach** organized around the critical tasks and text structures needed to engage in rigorous, grade-appropriate, content-area coursework. Focuses on high-leverage academic language that is applicable across content areas.
- Provides an organized method of content and language instruction that divides a lesson or unit into **discrete, measurable skills, tasks, or objectives and prepares students for successful completion** of a larger, more complex outcome or expectation.
- Is **explicitly taught and emphasizes oral and written language skills** to ensure that students develop the analytical language and processes necessary for college-ready work.

Constructing Meaning Institutes

A five-day Constructing Meaning institute builds teachers' capacity to infuse language instruction into their classroom practice while modeling a replicable process of professional collaboration.

The comprehensive handbook lays out a theoretical model and vision of instruction. It includes: tools that help teachers analyze content for language demands, strategies for teaching language, routines to support oral production, and drafting templates to improve academic writing.

The secondary handbook also includes content-specific modules for: English Language Arts, Mathematics, History, and Science. Secondary participants work with the *Constructing Meaning Instructional Units* and use them as models when designing their own instruction.

Capacity-building Model

E.L. Achieve's initiative work is not a one-time event. Throughout all phases of implementation – planning, launching, and sustaining – district teams work toward established goals. After initial training, there is ongoing support for improving classroom instruction. We provide videos to discuss, guides for self-reflection, rubrics for developing key teaching skills, and protocols for facilitating collaborative, results-driven discussions.

As part of our capacity-building model, partner districts join E.L. Achieve's expert networks through leadership seminars and ongoing support. Our goal is for districts to take ownership of the initiative and achieve deep, system-wide classroom implementation that leads to increased English learner achievement.