

State English Language Development Standards highlight and amplify the language demands of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that English learners need in order to gain advanced knowledge of English and academic achievement.

They call out the necessity of providing robust English language instruction throughout the instructional day – through both a dedicated, targeted ELD block and integration into other content delivery.

The *Blueprint for Serving English Learners* (graphic at right) outlines both purposes for language instruction. The **Systematic ELD Instructional Units** were developed from E.L. Achieve’s comprehensive framework, and are specifically designed to teach English language as its own subject of study (highlighted in red box).

Systematic ELD Instruction

Systematic ELD is dedicated time and targeted instruction that provides:

- A solid English language foundation to fully engage in a range of academic and real life situations
- Instruction organized by English proficiency level that follows a continuum of linguistic skills
- An emphasis on oral and written language in rigorous and relevant tasks
- Ample opportunities for structured and purposeful interaction and collaboration

Language Instruction for Content Learning

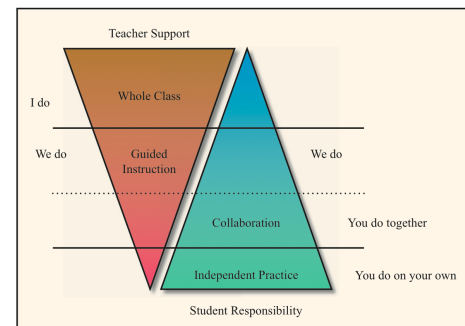
Constructing Meaning is a process for teaching content that provides:

- Explicit instruction to support English learners in understanding and using the language necessary for grade-level work
- Accelerated instruction that emphasizes critical literacy skills and sophisticated academic language
- Tools for analyzing the linguistic demands of complex text and tasks
- Ample opportunities for structured and purposeful interaction and collaboration

Critical research-based features of Systematic ELD instruction

1. Language learning and exploration are squarely in the foreground.
2. Students are grouped by assessed proficiency level for this part of the instructional day. This is determined by multiple sources, such as state language assessments, analysis of writing samples for vocabulary and grammatical knowledge (using the E.L. Achieve *ELD Matrix of Linguistic Knowledge* or language-focused writing rubric), the *Express Placement Assessment*, and recorded observations of oral production.
3. Instruction uses a functional language approach organized around essential purposes for communication. Language tasks are highly applicable to real-world and academic interactions that students must adroitly navigate. Instruction draws students’ attention to a variety of aspects of English (e.g., rhythm and cadence, pronunciation, colloquial expressions, formal and informal registers).
4. An organized method of language instruction is provided to prevent gaps and fill existing gaps in language knowledge that can hinder students’ achievement of full English proficiency. Instruction follows a developmental scope and sequence of language skills identified in ELP standards and the **Systematic ELD Handbook**.
5. Language is explicitly taught, and instruction emphasizes oral language development through structured, purposeful interaction, with substantive written practice to ensure students develop in-depth understanding of how English works, and acquire fluency and an accurate command of all modes of communication.

Systematic ELD Units employ a sound and well-articulated vision of instruction that clearly 1) builds background knowledge, 2) teaches high leverage language that is applicable to real life and grade-level work, 3) maps strategically with language objectives that build toward weekly and unit goals, 4) gradually releases responsibility to students (see graphic at right), and 5) consistently moves from abundant oral practice to authentic writing tasks.



Impact on students – information from teachers and coaches

“My students love the interactive practice activities and they are always excited for ELD time because they get to think and talk together. Their oral language production skills have improved.”

“Working on the **Ecology** unit, there is a lot of vocabulary to frontload at the beginning. Once the students have used the vocabulary, the sentence structures of pros and cons were a lot of fun. Students were very good at both the oral language and writing their thoughts using ‘One positive feature of the bike trails is that...’ or ‘Another advantage of the bike trails is that...’ The videos were so very helpful, so students could see them in action!”

“When I met Max he was a 6th grader in an intermediate group, struggling to participate in an activity generating sentences orally using present and future tense verbs. His sentences were stilted and vocabulary very limited. Several months later, the group was working on a culminating assessment task. Using graphic organizers, sentence frames, and charts from previous lessons as resources, students had to make decisions about how to formulate and respond to questions. Max wrote using various language patterns flexibly. He confidently conducted his interview for the class, navigating changing verb tenses, and using sophisticated vocabulary and various sentence structures as if he had known them all his life! He stood tall and proud, with a huge grin on his face.

When I asked him how he had learned so much, he explained that the graphic organizers, picture cards, and posters helped him think about what to say, and the sentence frames, verb cards, and language charts helped him think of how to say it. The teacher had given students lots of time to practice talking and writing together using games and fun activities. She showed them how to use the language during other subjects and encouraged them to try it out.

His teacher commented that Max came to life in ELD – participating and asking questions. As he had learned to use language more flexibly, he became interested in expanding his vocabulary to express himself more clearly. He knows how to use the language he’s learned in ELD to actively participate during other content instruction. He helps others and feels good about himself. This is a kid who hasn’t had many opportunities, at home or at school, to feel proud of himself – and now he does!”

Research-based approach to professional development

E.L. Achieve distinguishes itself from other professional development and publishing organizations by taking a system-wide approach. We developed our instructional materials to ensure school systems have a high quality, well-designed ELD curriculum to successfully implement the framework we teach. Available research suggests that the quality of learning is bolstered when district and site administrators set a clear direction by prioritizing ELD and supporting implementation.

In order to purchase **Systematic ELD Instructional Units**, teachers participate in multiple days of institutes to gain a solid vision of instruction and ELD concepts. Site and district administrators are provided with specialized training and tools to deepen their understanding of quality ELD instruction and learn how to support effective implementation.

Impact on instruction – information from administrators and teachers

“It wasn’t until teachers implemented the E.L. Achieve units that we consistently saw ELD lessons that looked like the kind of effective instruction we wanted to see happening in the classrooms. The demonstration of the units really increased understanding of the components of a good ELD lesson. Teachers were grateful to have the lessons designed for them and gained a much clearer understanding of lesson components such as structured practice as they implemented the units.”

“I’ve been teaching for four years. And I always thought I was a great teacher. But after using **Systematic ELD Unit** lessons, it hit me that I could have been doing so much better. I finally understand what good teaching looks like. I love how you explain things for me and help me understand. Now, I feel like a great teacher.”

“The units have definitely been well received in our District. Teachers have been able to successfully synthesize the theoretical concepts presented in training sessions with the practical implementation of the Units in the classroom. Our teachers appreciate learning the methodology/approach of **Systematic ELD** instruction and then having the materials to match what they have been trained to implement. This is year one of District-wide implementation and as the school year is coming to an end, I am so impressed with the progress we have made!”

Data from three California districts* implementing Systematic ELD Units for over two years

	Cohort size	AMAO 1			AMAO 2 <5 years			AMAO 2 >5 years		
		Target	Attaining	Met?	Target	Attaining	Met?	Target	Attaining	Met?
District 1	1,565	57.5%	62.9%	YES	21.4%	28.8%	YES	47%	53.5%	YES
District 2	3,555	57.5%	63.2%	YES	21.4%	31.8%	YES	47%	56.6%	YES
District 3	1,090	57.5%	72.0%	YES	21.4%	46.2%	YES	47%	65.7%	YES

* Fullerton, Mt. View-Whisman, and Sausalito School Districts