



Multilingual Learners Newsletter

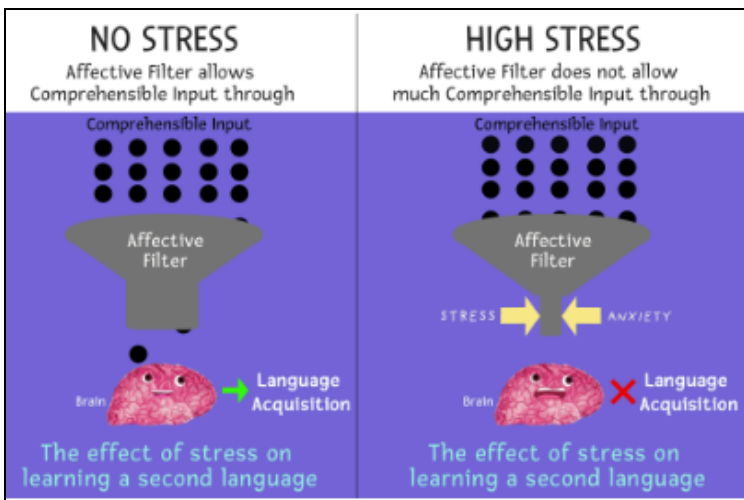
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Routines and Structures Benefit Multilingual Learners

The goal of Title III and any English Language Instructional Program is to teach students both academic content and proficiency in the English language. According to Stephen Krashen, [second language acquisition theories/hypotheses](#) include acquisition/learning, comprehensible input and output, natural order, monitor, and affective filter. If you are interested in reading more, check out his [Principles and Practices book](#).

Let's look at the [affective filter hypothesis](#), which states that a learner's emotional state affects their receptiveness to language. When students feel anxious or nervous, they are not open to acquiring the new language. When students feel comfortable and relaxed, they are much more open to language acquisition. Routines and structures benefit multilingual learners because they don't have to worry about what is happening. They know the routines and can therefore focus on the language and be more receptive to acquiring it.



In addition to routines and structures, we can teach our students [executive functioning skills](#). Let's define the term **executive functions**. These are a set of skills we all use to control our attention, initiate tasks, manage time, and keep ourselves organized. According to Mitch Weaver, the author of [Executive Functions for Every Classroom](#), teachers can embed executive functions into their regular schedule and routines using an [organized binder](#). These routines happen the first five and last five minutes of each lesson. The daily routine has a kickoff, agenda, table of contents, academic toolkit, and the concluding routine. Routines are good for all students, but they are especially important for EL/MLs.

THE DAILY ROUTINE

(About 5 minutes before the lesson and 5 minutes after it.)

KICKOFF	A brief, low-stakes prompt to activate prior knowledge. Similar to a bell-ringer, but everyone starts <i>together</i> .
AGENDA	Students write down the plan for the day in their agendas.
TABLE OF CONTENTS	New materials go into binders in chronological order and students list them in the table of contents.
ACADEMIC TOOLKIT	These materials are used all year long. If any of these will be part of the lesson, now is the time to access them.
TEACH YOUR PLANNED LESSON	
CONCLUDING ROUTINE	Students reflect on what they learned that day and let the teacher know if they need extra support.

THE CULT OF PEDAGOGY PODCAST, EPISODE 231



Spotlight: Ronnie Grace - Millard Public Schools

Ronnie is in her 7th year of teaching and recently presented at the fall MID TESOL conference. Her presentation, [Math Literacy for MLS](#) was very informative. We reached out and asked Ronnie to share her routines and procedures. Here is her response:

“In my ELD Math class, we really focus on what each individual student needs. After administering a pre-assessment to see exactly what each EL students' math skills are, students are grouped together based on those skills. Students usually fall within 3-4 groups, ranging from beginning (adding and subtracting) to advanced (working with fractions and decimals, and

introducing algebra concepts). Each day, I touch base with each group to some extent. In order to check-in with each student, I set my classroom up in a manner that mimics guided math groups, but instead of students rotating to me, I rotate to each student group. For example, I might explicitly teach "Group 1" for 15 minutes while "Group 2" and "Group 3" work independently on a worksheet or task card activity reviewing what they learned the day before. Then, after their mini-lesson, "Group 1" will transition to doing an exit ticket to independently work on their new skill while I do a quick mini-lesson with "Group 2". After "Group 2" is set to practice their new skill independently, I check in with "Group 3" and watch them work. The next day, I would start a new mini-lesson with "Group 3" while the other two groups start their work independently. Once students have mastered all four domains of math (adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing), and can apply those skills to higher level math concepts, like fractions, algebra, or decimals, they graduate my class and move into grade-level math classes. Even though they are no longer in my ELD math class at that point, collaboration with grade-level math teachers upon that move is essential. My classroom is a busy place with students interacting and working on math the entire time. To make sure our classroom stays busy, without getting out of control, my expectations and procedures are laid out very clearly for the students. Each student has a job upon entry and exit of the classroom, and we read our class expectations, some of which the students made themselves, at the end of every class period!” Ronnie’s contact information is on her presentation if you would like to email her for more information!

Guidance: Rule 15 exit procedures changes coming. After a visit with the US Department of Education, Nebraska will need to remove the option for EL exit due to an IEP. All English learners must meet proficiency on the ELPA21 or Alt ELPA Assessment to exit. Students with IEPs may have their allowable accommodations and if a student has a disability that prohibits access to a domain, could have a domain exemption. We anticipate this change will be implemented in the 2025-26 school year. More information will come as we get it.

Additional Resources:

- ELPA21 Training Modules will be available starting December 2nd. See the [list of modules](#). [ELPA21 Training](#).
- [Domain Exemption Guidance](#)
- ELPA21 Workshops: free for any educator in our state! [Sign up here!](#)
- Are you interested in joining the 4th Cohort of Project ASSETS? Cohort 4 begins June 2025 and if you want more information, [click here](#).
- [Guidance from US Dept of ED around the use of AI](#)
- Check out [Nebraska Early Learning Library](#) and [Growing Nebraska Readers](#)
- [Ubeats](#), Free STEM Modules for grades 6-12 (Spanish coming soon!)
- Please remember to use the resources in [TransACT ParentNotices!](#) There are documents to support all areas of education. NDE provides the subscription and anyone can [self-onboard](#).

Questions: Please contact us with any questions or concerns regarding your ML students or program.

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