

ELL Quick Tip

Do you have an ELL student and wonder how to help him/her in the classroom?
Then the ELL Quick Tip is for you!

Tip #3

“Turn and talk”

Instead of asking students to raise their hands if they know an answer, have each student “turn and talk” with a neighbor.

- Each student takes a turn responding to the question with a partner
- Students then can share what their partners told them

Why is this a good strategy for ELL students?

This is a simple but very powerful strategy for English language learners and is as effective for kindergarteners as it is for high school seniors. English learners need as many **opportunities to practice using English** as possible. When you call on one student at a time, often ELL students do not get the chance to reply. English learners often need extra time to translate your question into their language, formulate a response, then put the response in English. By that time, you are three questions ahead.

When one student responds at a time, only one of twenty-five students is talking at any given time. In “turn and talk” you have **half of your class responding** and the other half actively engaged listening to their partners at any given time, maximizing students’ opportunity to practice English.

Having students “turn and talk” with a partner provides ELL students the time to formulate a response in the relatively **safe environment** of talking with one other student, not the whole class. If ELL students are paired with native English speaking students, this also provides ELLs with positive **language models**.