

FACT SHEET

FACT SHEET 7

CHALLENGES FOR ADOLESCENT ELL STUDENTS

- Adolescent ELLs are at varying stages on a path to academic literacy.
 - ◊ Some are not struggling, others are. Individual student characteristics play a significant role in English language literacy development, so educators need to know their students' characteristics.
- Processes of L2 literacy development are influenced by a number of variables that interact with one another (L1 oracy, L2 oracy, SES, and more).
- L1 transfers phonemic awareness, comprehension and language learning strategies, and L1 and L2 oral knowledge.
- L1 literacy is not necessary for L2 literacy, but it is beneficial. Academic literacy in the native language facilitates the development of academic literacy in English..
- Teaching the 5 major components of reading to ELLs is necessary, but not sufficient for developing academic literacy. ELLs need to develop oral proficiency as well.
- Adolescent ELL students may differ from non-ELL students and from younger ELLs in terms of some aspects of academic literacy development.
- Adolescent ELLs must learn multiple complex course content, usually with little context, while simultaneously learning the language in which it is being taught..
- Vocabulary development is a must.
- Adolescent ELLs have fewer years to master the English language.
- Many adolescent ELLs have below grade-level literacy in their native language.
- Adolescent ELLs enroll at an age beyond which literacy instruction is usually provided to students..
- Many adolescent ELLs fail high-stakes (i.e. Regents) exams multiple times.
- Many are, therefore, unlikely to graduate with their cohort..
- Adolescent ELLs often age-out of school without a diploma. Choice aids adolescent motivation.
- Many are precluded from participating in extracurricular activities because of failing grades and/or lack of access to information.
- High quality instruction for English learners is similar to high quality instruction for other, English-speaking students, but ELLs need instructional accommodations and supports.

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