

Welcoming Bilingual Children into Primary School



Education & Children's Services



English as an Additional Language Service (EAL)

Email: eal.service@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Resources and Advice: blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/as/ealaberdeenshire/

Guidelines and forms: asn-aberdeenshire.org/english-as-an-additional-language/

Contents

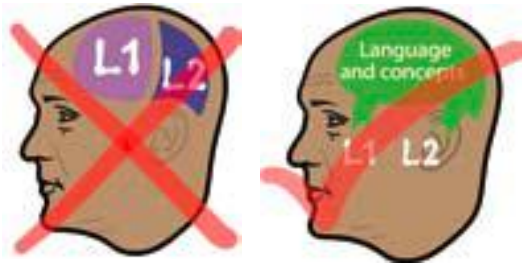
Introduction.....	3
Discussing new children with the class.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Bilingualism	4
Cultural Awareness	4
General advice for teacher	5
Strategies for supporting bilingual learners	8
Listening and Talking	8
Reading.....	10
Writing	13
Maths	14
L1 support materials	14
Other Resources	15
Homework.....	16
Home School Communication	16

Introduction

This is a booklet of helpful hints for class teachers who are supporting bilingual learners. The booklet contains some background information, advice and signposts to resources. Please get in touch with eal.service@aberdeenshire.gov.uk if you would like any further advice or information.

Bilingualism

Bilingual learners are pupils who function in more than one language in their daily lives. The term 'bilingual' emphasises that learners already have one language and that English is a second or additional language. The term does not imply an equal or specified level of fluency in two or more languages.



The brain has an unlimited capacity for learning language. The first language that a child learns provides the best foundation for learning additional languages and new concepts. It is **vital** to continue progress in the home language, as additional languages and new concepts are developed at school.

Information from Learning in 2+ languages. For more information on bilingualism, see this document on http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/images/LearninginTwoPlusLanguages_tcm4-306089.pdf

Learning Teaching Scotland (2005) Learning in 2+ Languages. Education Scotland.

Cultural Awareness

Be aware of how you may perceive others from your own perspective, based on your own experiences and cultural heritage. When you meet someone, you may expect them to act, speak and think in the way that you are used to. People may do or say something that appears rude or unusual when it is in fact the norm in their culture.

It is important to beware of generalisations. Not all people from another culture will be the same, just as not all Scots wear a kilt or eat Haggis and Shortbread.

Before a bilingual learner joins the class

- Circle time discussion prior to children arriving

What would it be like to move to another country?

What would it be like if no one spoke your language?

Have any of you ever been in another country?
What would it be like to stay there?

- It can be scary going to somewhere you haven't been before.

What can we do to help children feel safe and welcome?

- Try sharing a story in another language with the children. If possible use a talking pen to read story in another language.



What was it like?

How did it feel?

- For children new to English they are learning all day in a language that is new to them. Try asking the children these questions after listening to the story.

Can you say anything about what happened in the story? What helped you to understand the story?

How can we help someone new to English to understand?

- Show text in another language (from dual language book)

What can you say about the writing?

What helps you understand (own language, pictures)

- If the new child copies your work it is because they are learning how to form the letters and words.

General advice for teacher

Create a welcoming environment

Check that you know how to pronounce your pupil's name before introducing him/her to the class.

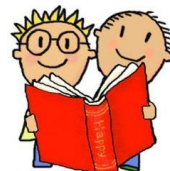


Give the pupil time to settle in

A silent or receptive period is quite normal

Think carefully about where you will place the pupil

Pair the pupil with a responsive, caring pupil who can act as a role model and guide.



Make good use of visual materials

Always ensure that you set any instructions within a visual context.

Prepare differentiated materials

Remember to produce materials that you have differentiated on a linguistic and not cognitive basis. Learning should be at children's academic level rather than their level of English. Use visuals, pre-teach key vocabulary, encourage learners to take an active role in activities, sequencing images to show understanding.

Maximise your pupil's learning experience

For example - if you are asked to help with spelling there might be an opportunity to explain a general rule.

Encourage active participation and collaboration

Ensure bilingual pupils are involved in routine responsibilities. Pair pupil with a buddy to do these at first.

Use a visual timetable

Widget symbols (Communicate in Print, on school computers) may be used for subjects/activities. Adding photos of the class/teachers helps to make it real, so the children recognise the people in the pictures. This means you can take photos of the PE teacher etc. so that the children will always recognise teachers they have not met. This supports them in feeling secure and helps to avoid children being worried by new faces.

Rules

- The class rules may not be self-explanatory to children.
- Children may have very different experiences of school and the rules of the classroom.
- They may take time to get used to the greater freedom and different approaches to learning.
- They may not understand the rules immediately and may not understand when or where they apply.
- It is important to make sure that children are aware that there are still boundaries, despite being allowed to work in groups, speak during lessons, get up if they need something etc.

Routines and Rituals

The following may be helpful:

- Start the week with a class discussion.
- Play calm music for five minutes between two activities so children can tidy up and prepare.
- Provide a visual overview of the day ahead.
- End the day with a saying.
- Inform the children at the end of the day who will be teaching the next day, and if there any announcements.
- Show the children when the class will end, ten minutes before this will actually happen.
- Discuss what games could be played, during play breaks in particular.

For children who are not fluent in the new language, it is even more important that they know how the day is divided up, and what is expected of them. Use symbols and icons, so children can see what activity will occur at what time.

It can be extremely tiring operating and learning in another language, while still learning that language. When children are showing signs of being tired or frustrated, it can be helpful for them to have time to rest. It can be helpful for them to have L1 audiobooks (e.g. Mantra Lingua talking pen) or toys like Lego or K'NEX between activities (make a symbol or icon for these too). A child that is tired or quickly over- stimulated can greatly benefit from being simply allowed to build something or do something else alone.

Strategies for supporting bilingual learners

Listening and Talking

- Involve in mainstream activities from the start.
- Teacher modelling of English well supported by clear visuals
- To encourage language acquisition, **in-class support** which allows bilingual pupils to work alongside their peers, is preferable to being withdrawn to work one to one with an adult.
- **First Words Sheets** Make the pupil feel welcome by learning how to **pronounce their name** properly and a **few words** in their first language (e.g. hello, goodbye)
- Match up with **supportive class buddies**.
- Teach **survival language** – Toilet, food/lunch words, clothes (PE, Art)



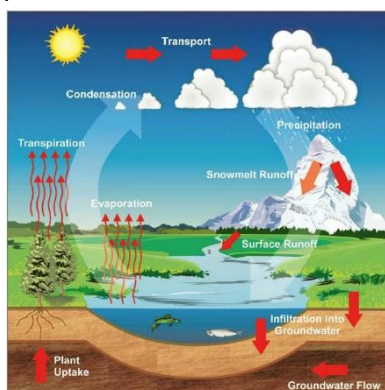
<https://www.newburyparkschool.net/lotm/index.html>



- **Gesture** – clear and unambiguous.

Rather than point to something, walk over to it and touch it. Sometimes gestures can confuse if unclear.

- **Be visual** – use pictorial support as much as possible. However BEWARE clarity of visuals.



Sometimes visuals confuse rather than clarify (The cliff picture illustrates easy and difficult, whereas most people say climbing and walking).

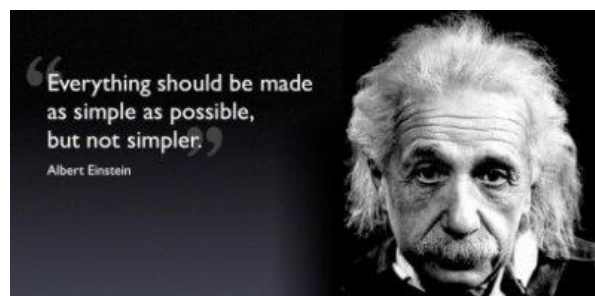


A clear visual can help children to access learning, even at a higher cognitive level (i.e. the rain cycle).

- Use **visual timetables**.
- Electronic resources – recorder speech alongside pictures (talking tins, photo books etc.) These provide good opportunities for children to listen to instructions again if needed, or to practise their own use of English by recording their voice and listening to it.
- Encourage **collaborative play** and opportunities for meaningful talk such as problem solving activities, with peers who demonstrate good models of English e.g. cooperative learning groups – encourage participation by allocating **active roles**



- **Slow down** your rate of speech and **keep instructions simple**. Children who are in the earlier stages of acquiring English will find it difficult to follow instructions with several keywords.
- **Respond** to the pupil in a sentence using the grammatically correct form – e.g. Reply to 'Me football win' with 'Good! You won the football match.' Remember, what you say is what the children will think is correct.
- **Do not worry if the pupil does not speak at first**. The 'silent period' is very common and may last up to six months. The pupil is listening, absorbing and processing language until confident enough to speak. Encourage them to **respond on other** ways such as gesturing, a show of hands, thumbs up, traffic lights or following other oral instructions.
- Give pupils **plenty of time to respond** to questions – they need time to process language and/or translate what has been said. Avoid asking '**Do you understand**' because a bilingual pupil will almost always say 'Yes'. If they do not have enough language to understand a further explanation they will find it easier to observe and copy what their peers are doing.
- Use strategies like '**think-pair-share**' to help form answers and fill vocabulary gaps or **Barrier Games** to describe objects/pictures, match words and pictures, reinforce map skills/directions and have telephone conversations.



- Card games in format of happy families. Children learn focus keywords and common structures i.e. "Do you have ____?" – Can focus on any vocabulary.

Relate learning to previous knowledge. Children will have prior knowledge and may already have some knowledge or experience of the learning subject.

Imagine trying to show your knowledge on the picture (right). You may be familiar with triangles, the colours, tessellation, and fractals. Now imagine you are restricted to only using words beginning with 'Z'. It is hard to show what you know, but you still know it.











Using strategies such as allowing children to match pictures, move shapes around to form patterns, draw etc. would help them to show their understanding.

Reading

Where there is little/no First Language (L1) literacy

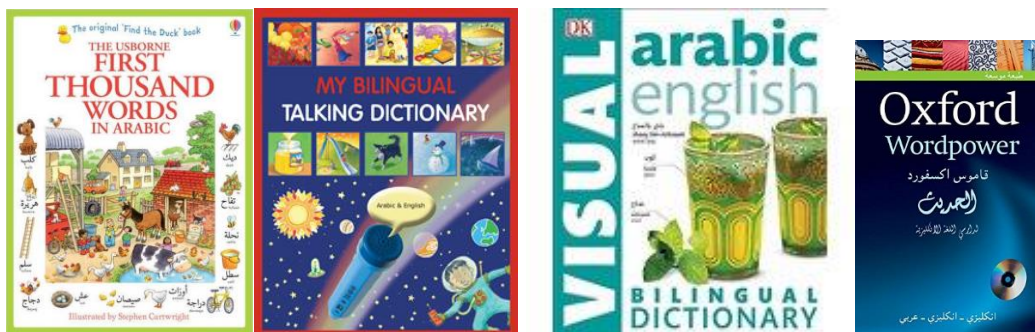
- Children will benefit from exposure to fluent **reading**
- Place with a reading group (with illustrated texts), encourage children to learn to recognise key words, match words to pictures, sequence pictures from the text, find words starting with sounds etc.
- Where children are entering school in P2 and beyond, focus on building sight vocabulary (illustrated words – match pictures to words). Teach sounds/blending as a skill to add to sight reading.
- Input from EAL, SfL, and PSA to boost literacy.

Stage Two Phoneme Word List

sh		ch	
ship		chop	
shop		chin	
sharp		chip	
dish		church	

Where there is L1 literacy

- EAL initial assessment will provide some information on L1 proficiency. Information on other languages is available as part of supporting resources. Other languages may have a different script and may be written in a different direction.
- Children may have some English literacy skills. They may be able to decode some words with or without understanding.
- Children will benefit from a dual language dictionary (first thousand words (Usborne) & My Bilingual Talking Dictionary suitable for early primary, DK Visual Dictionary suitable for later primary, L1/English word power dictionaries suitable for late primary and secondary.



- Translated resources available from Twinkl.

General reading strategies – Some will apply as level of English progresses.

- Use **pictorial flashcards to play pre-reading games** e.g. Snap, The Memory Game, Odd one Out, **Ordering/Sequencing**
- **Pre-teach key vocabulary** using visuals. EAL pupils need additional exposure to words and opportunities to practise the production of new words and sounds in a small group setting.

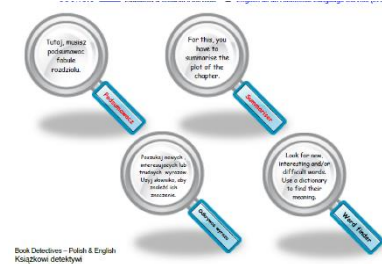
- Create a language rich environment where **displays** are enhanced with **key words**. **Display examples** of common sentence structures (visually supported).



- Games to reinforce sight vocabulary e.g. point to the word, word bingo, snap cards etc.
- To build reading vocabulary, **teach words in context** and support with **visuals** as opposed to using only phonics. Be aware that many children have difficulty hearing, recognising and pronouncing many English sounds (e.g. 'p' causes difficulty for many Arabic speakers; also consonant clusters of more than two consonants - Arabic speakers would often add a vowel i.e. spilit, ithrew, lengthes (split, threw, lengths); also vowel sounds – English has around three times the number of vowel sounds, so learners may find perceiving differences/producing vowels challenging – i.e. ship/sheep and bad/bed. This will influence reading and spelling. Children with other first languages may experience the same or different challenges, depending on their first language.
- Choose books with a lot of repetition to consolidate vocabulary and structure of sentences.

- **Support individual reading** (at current level of English) *but also* place pupils in a **challenging reading group** (not a group with reading difficulties). Here, new vocabulary will be learned and the pupil will benefit from listening to the language used in discussions.

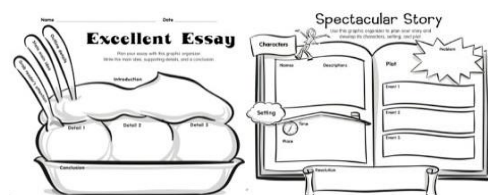
- To help learners understand the **purpose for reading**, set questions **before** reading the text to prevent decoding skills being solely used. Introduce question words gradually – Who? What? When? Where? Why? (Use Question Master – book detectives). **Translated Book detectives are available.**



- Use sequencing of pictures to support retelling of stories e.g. Photo copy pictures/pages from the book for children to sequence.

- For reading comprehension/topic

reading activities, use printed graphic organisers to help learners visualise the task. Collaborative reading activities e.g. info gap/jigsaw reading (where groups have to answer different questions and feed back to other groups, or they have to summarise a part of the story to another group).



- Write own book – pupils could work with an L1 buddy, good model of English or on their own to produce a book.
- Encourage children to bring photos of home. Provide children with a disposable camera for holidays – This can support writing about the holidays.

- Recognise how important it is to **choose suitable reading books**- look at content to check if texts are culturally insensitive or contain themes out with the child's experiences e.g. looking at skiing with a child who lived in a desert climate. (It is appropriate to introduce new vocabulary and experiences, but these would first need to be introduced through visuals, realia and experiences (rather than assuming children have prior knowledge of the subject)).

- Beware of **idioms**- translation is usually literal and can cause confusion – 'I'll give you a ring tonight', 'It's raining cats and dogs'.

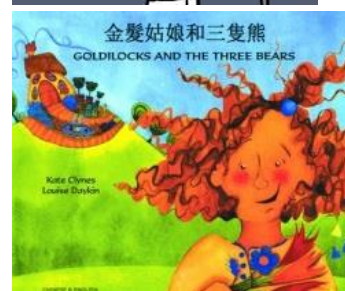
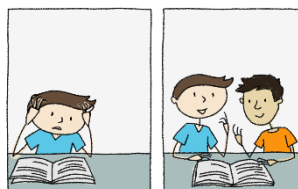
- Use **Audio Books**



- Borrow **Dual Language Books/L1 Books**

- Paired Reading – Mixed ages (L1 and English)

- Parents to visit and read in L1






Writing

- Use **talk** prior to writing. Can the children **say** what they want to write?
- Create pupil's own **glossary** with sets of associated words e.g. food words, transport words, topic words. Cut up old catalogues/magazines to illustrate words. (Gives ownership) ⁱ

1) When I am allowed to write story in class using Urdu I feel very comfortable and very spashall and very important. I feel good that people see my Urdu and English story. I feel very comfortable because I no how to write in Urdu and ~~I no~~ why we write Urdu because we learn more English. I feel spashall because I don't want to forget my language.

2) I like reading story in Urdu because I like my language and I like reading into my language because it's really easy for me I like to read Urdu stories because I understand my language I like Urdu stories because some story is true.

3) When I am allowed to use Urdu in class it helps me to read and write English. When I have to learn new English words I remember them faster if I study the words in Urdu. Like this

English	Urdu	Picture
Lungs	پھیپھڑے	
Kidneys	کلیے	
Heart	دل	

- Use **realia** (objects from real life), **concept cartoons**, **mind maps/concept maps** (to visualise)
- **Model Tasks** and provide/display samples for children to refer to.



Brian has brown hair and blue eyes.

James has ____ hair and ____ brown eyes.

Emily has ____ and ____.

Ryan ____.

- **Scaffold sentences** (repetitive structures). Write several sentences, leaving more gaps each time so that the children can insert words in the appropriate place, referring to the earlier model. Using illustrated dictionaries/glossaries the children can be supported in writing independently.

- Remember that Pronouns/Prepositions can be confusing – he, she, his, her/in, on etc.
- Pre prepared '**Sentence makers**'.
- **Match** halves of cut sentences (topic based).

to _____

went to _____







he got there by _____

saw _____

ly favourite part was _____

To _____

Address _____

The		is		.
The		is		.
The		is		.



- **Cloze passages** (The man had ____ hair).
- **Writing frames**- sentence starters, structure for writing (e.g. letter, postcard, instructions etc.)

- Have **visual dictionaries** and **word banks** readily accessible during writing activities. **Usborne/DK Visual Dictionaries/Mantra Lingua**. Use **topic webs**
- **Group/paired work** initially helps EAL pupil make connections and copy expected conventions. (Peer modelling)
- **Reading comprehension** tasks – Adapt Book Detectives

a) Summariser

- What is the story about?
- Give selected pages or paragraphs a title

b) Illustrator

c) Question Master – Start with one word answers or cloze activities.

- **Sequencing tasks** – Children sequence words to form a sentence, sentences to form a story.
- Stories with a **repetitive structure** such as ‘The Three Little Pigs’ are helpful – The children can use the first part (built a house of straw etc.) to support more independent writing of the second and third parts (built a house of sticks, built a house of bricks etc.) This can be supported by a visual glossary of key words (straw, sticks, bricks, wolf, pig etc.)
- **Text Marking** – circle or **highlight** key words in topic texts or character descriptions.
- **Writing games** i.e. snap/dominoes to consolidate key vocabulary.

A good sequence for developing writing – talk with peers, practise words and sentences, write together, write independently, and review (Separate sessions, later doing all in one session as children advance in use of English).

Maths

- **Support the language of maths** in a group, provide context for new vocabulary (through demonstration, visuals etc.).
- Do not hold the pupil back in maths or put in a low set group just because of unfamiliar language – pupils may have been operating at an advanced level (important to refer to translated school reports from previous school if available).
- Be aware that where pupils have strengths in some areas, they may not have covered other areas.
- Be aware of the many **different representations for numbers, mathematical symbols** and methods of computation used in other languages, for example in Arabic.

Western Arabic 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Eastern Arabic ٠ ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩

- Use **translated resources** if literate in L1.

L1 support materials

The EAL service has a range of first language resources available. Other resources are available from a range of sources: dual language dictionaries (as above), Twinkl, Mantra Lingua etc.

Other Resources

Widgit Products



InPrint 3



SymWriter 2



Widgit Online



Widgit Go



Widgit products are applications which use Widgit symbols to support communication and understanding. All schools in Aberdeenshire should have

access to InPrint on one machine within the school. **InPrint** is useful for creating resources to support children – it is most suitable for staff to use in advance of teaching. There is an ALDO course on how to use InPrint – ‘Communicate in Print 2’.

Read & Write is useful for creating resources and for using during lessons. It is user friendly and so helpful for children to use independently. It should be available on all Aberdeenshire machines. It is an application which has many helpful features for bilingual learners, and all children and young people. The bar (pictured below)



will appear at the top of the screen and enable easy access to a picture dictionary, text-to-speech, spell checker, prediction, sounds like/confusable words, verb checker, screenshot reader and other features. Good practice is to have the bar open for all lessons – this allows you to quickly and easily add visuals to support lessons, look up meanings of words, listen to text etc.

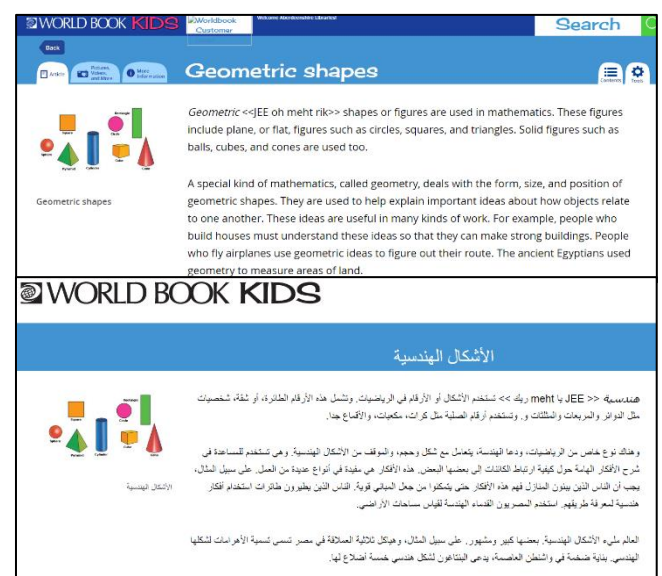


British Council Website - LearnEnglish Kids is brought to you by the British Council, the world's English teaching experts. We have lots of free online games, songs, stories and activities for children. For parents, we have articles on supporting children in learning English, videos on using English at home and information about face-to-face

courses around the world.

www.worldbookonline.com has translated information on a variety of subject – click on the kids section and search for a topic. You can then select to read in a different language - this uses electronic translation. It will not be perfect but a useful resource for supporting learning in the first language.

www.overdrive.com has lots of ebooks (in many languages) available to read – you need a library card to access this.



Homework

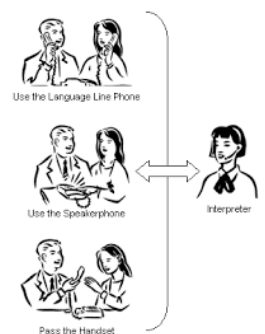
It is hard work thinking/ translating/ speaking in a new language all day, every day.

- Do not worry about homework initially – pupils need rest time.
- Parents may not be literate in English and therefore not able to help.
- Parents may be at work and not available to help.
- Gradually introduce simple tasks – may have to complete in school until language has developed sufficiently and a routine is established.
- Parents may not understand homework expectations e.g. parents who thought child had to copy reading book out.
- Check that pupils know meaning of spelling words (Illustrated spelling lists)

Home School Communication

Communication between home and school may be less straightforward than for children with English as a first language. Please see the EAL Service guidelines on Accessing Interpreting and Translation services on <http://asn-aberdeenshire.org/english-as-an-additional-language/> . There are several resources which can support communication:

- Translated comments – A set of notes available in L1/English (Reminders, Compliments, Homework, and Inappropriate Behaviour).
- Telephone interpreting. The school office will have information on this service. It allows you to call an interpreter and have a conversation with someone in person, using the interpreter on the phone to communicate. You can also request the interpreter to phone a number and have the conversation solely over the phone.
- Interpreters – Can be booked for parent meetings – recommended for enrolment meetings, MAAP reviews, annual parent meetings. It is more effective to discuss pupil progress with an interpreter rather than have a report translated. This allows parents to ask questions and enables two way discussion.



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ⁱ Cummins, J. 2005. Teaching for cross-language transfer in dual language education: Possibilities and pitfalls. TESOL Symposium on Dual Language Education: Teaching and Learning Two Languages in the EFL Setting. Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey, 23 September.