

## Supporting multilingual learners (MLLs)/English language learners (ELLs) during the COVID-19 Shutdown

March 2020

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### Context

As districts and schools take the difficult but necessary step of closing schools to slow the spread of COVID-19, supporting student learning at home is a top priority. When it comes to slowed academic progress, multilingual learners (MLLs)/English language learners (ELLs) are among the most vulnerable of our students during this critical time. Supporting our MLLs/ELLs requires that we consider their unique challenges to accessing distance learning, both in the technological and comprehensible sense. For MLLs/ELLs, especially those who are at the beginning proficiency levels, it is crucial that they have continued access to materials in their home language(s) to continue their literacy and language development. The recommendations below offer general guidance on what to consider as you determine how to best continue your students' language and literacy development.

### General Guidance for distance learning and MLLs/ELLs

**LEAs have a legal obligation to provide** MLLs/ELLs with language development instruction and access to grade-level instruction and assignments. LEAs also have a legal obligation to provide information to parents/guardians in a language they can understand. Read more about the rights of parents and students [here](#).

**Consider a hybrid model for at-home learning to ensure equity of access (virtual learning and/or assignment packets).** Ideally, teachers are still working and can teach virtually or create pre-recorded lessons AND students have internet access on a smartphone or computer. In the resource list below, we have indicated which resources require online access and which ones can be printed and sent home. Some districts allow students to check out technology and provide guidance on how/where to get internet access.

**Identify current materials (sets of student texts, workbooks, etc.) to send home.** Determine if your current curriculum has a digital integrated or designated ELD/ESL component and prioritize continuing with this curriculum. The same goes for expectations around independent reading, strategies for annotating, etc. Keep in mind subscriptions your district may already have (e.g., IXL, Achieve3000, Read180). This is also a great time to clear out old texts that teachers no longer use. Allow parents to pick up books or send some home with students. Please visit the English Learner Success Forum to learn [five things districts and educators can do](#) to support Instruction for English Learners at this time.

**Make staying connected with your students a priority.** Regardless of the continuing at-home learning scenario, make it a priority to connect via phone, text, or live video with your students on a routine basis to check in and provide an outlet for support or discussion. Many of our learners rely on school as a safe haven, both physically and emotionally, and this disruption to routine will be particularly challenging for some. Below are suggested tools for staying in touch with students.

**Set reasonable expectations for home literacy and language learning.** Students and families will be juggling a new reality and priorities at home, so it is not reasonable to expect that an adult (English speaking or otherwise) is consistently available to provide academic support. Reassure parents that continuing to read, discuss texts, and teach their child in their home language is acceptable and preferred. Follow this link for recommendations to inspire parents on how they can support their child with at-home learning: [English Learner Family Engagement During Coronavirus](#).

**Consider what students can do independently and what requires a teacher or other adult.** When possible, prioritize guidance and activities that children can work on relatively independently while providing parent-friendly guidance for how to best support students diverse learning needs that impact their reading and writing skills.

**Draw on the expertise of your colleagues.** Consider how you can partner with families during this time by drawing upon the expertise of other ELD/ESL educators, family and community liaisons, translation supports, or other community partners who work closely with these student populations and their communities. Use these partners to assess families' technology needs and how the district can support. For more guidance on multilingual learners' and their families' unique concerns during this time please visit: [Colorín Colorado- Coronavirus](#).

## Guidance and Tech Tools to Support Multilingual Learners with Distance Learning

Guidance on...	Tech Tools	Language Considerations
Tech tools for keeping in touch with students	<p><a href="#">Talking Points</a>: An app that allows schools to communicate with families in their home language (human and machine translation into over 100 languages.)</p> <p><a href="#">Remind.com App</a>: Use this app to text students and families. Messages can be sent to groups or individuals. Students and families sign up with a teacher invite code.</p> <p><a href="#">Google Voice</a>: A voice number that you can use on your phone and through the web.</p> <p><a href="#">Zoom</a>: Use this app to connect via video or phone with students.</p>	Remember when texting parents/families, they must be provided communication in a language they can understand. Consider using these tools to conduct daily morning meetings, set "office hours", or check-in one-on-one.
Live or recorded video	<p><b>Live Teaching</b>: Zoom is currently offering free accounts for educators and students. Learn how to set up this service <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p><b>Recording Lessons</b>: It is easy to record lessons via Zoom and post them to a Google drive for students to access. Recording lessons is particularly useful for students who may not have consistent routines or access to technology.</p>	<p><b>Make the Learning Visible!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the live or recorded video lessons as an opportunity to continue to develop and assess speaking and listening skills. Remember to speak slowly and clearly, scaffold, and model, model, model!</li> <li>• Pre-record your lesson that you will use for a live lesson so that you can play and pause the lesson to have group discussions.</li> <li>• As you prepare for instruction (in ELD and any content area) think about how you can make language and content learning visible for students and how you can continue to use instructional tools such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint presentations</li> <li>• YouTube</li> <li>• Photos and illustrations</li> <li>• Sentence strips</li> <li>• Small whiteboard</li> <li>• Items found around your home</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Assigning reading and writing tasks	<p><b>Managing Assignments</b>: Consider using <a href="#">Google Classroom</a> to create daily writing prompts for students or Google Forms with quick response questions for students to answer from each lesson.</p> <p><b>Tip</b>: Search any one of these resources on YouTube for excellent videos on how to best use each tool for virtual learning with MLLs/ELLs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">G Suite (Google Classroom)</a> (teacher training center)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Keep students' English language proficiency levels in mind!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chunk your lessons knowing that your pacing is going to take longer.</li> <li>• Create a scheduled routine of learning (i.e. Monday preview vocabulary, Tuesday: Read a text, Wednesday: Discuss the text in-depth, Thursday-Friday: Write.</li> <li>• Consider your students' levels of English proficiency. If you are creating a Google doc or sending home an</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Padlet</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Flip Grid</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Screencastify</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Zoom</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Nearpod</a></li></ul>	<p>assignment, embed the linguistic supports within the assignment. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Glossary</li><li>• Word banks</li><li>• Sample or model responses</li><li>• Sentence starters</li><li>• Clear and concise directions. Translation apps are not perfect but consider including a translated version of the directions.</li></ul>
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## Resources for continued literacy and language development for multilingual learners

- **Can Print:** A checkmark in the first column indicates that teachers can print resources to create assignment packets.
- **Needs an adult:** “Yes” or “No” in the second column indicates whether a teacher or other adult is needed *after initial sign up and/or orientation of the tool*. Where the answer is “No”, the resource can be student-led after initial sign up and/or orientation from a teacher or other adult.
- **English Language Proficiency (ELP):** Materials are categorized by “all proficiency levels” through “advanced”. Follow your state’s guidelines on proficiency to determine what best meets the needs of your students.
- **Action Steps:** In the last column we have indicated where a teacher must sign up to enable student access and where the resource may be teacher led or student driven (teachers are encouraged to still make assignments using student driven resources by printing and sharing materials).

Printable	Needs a teacher or adult	Languages	ELP and Grade Level	Resource	Description and Teacher Action Step
	No	English Spanish	All proficiency levels All grades	<a href="#">EPIC</a> <a href="#">EPIC in Spanish</a>	Robust library of texts, quizzes, and videos. Teachers can assign texts and create text sets. Also available in Spanish. <b>Action Step:</b> Teachers can <a href="#">sign up</a> using a Google account (or any school email) and can provide students with an access code or add them via Google Classroom.
✓	Yes	English only	All proficiency levels All grades	<a href="#">Teaching Matters</a>	NYC DOE-aligned curriculum. Currently posting and creating weekly Google slide presentations/ lessons for every grade level. Will soon post a model for MLLs/ELLs. Includes guidance for teachers, a schedule, and easy-to-follow directions. <b>Action Step:</b> No sign up necessary. Teachers can use the presentations for live or recorded instruction and share the slides with students. A teacher or other adult must lead.
	No	English only	All proficiency levels All grades	<a href="#">Learning English VOA news</a>	Prerecorded video lessons. Young people act in the videos using authentic language. Lessons include instruction in speaking, vocabulary, and writing. There are also printable worksheets and assessments. <b>Action Step:</b> No sign up necessary. Teacher led or student driven.
✓	No	English Spanish	All proficiency levels 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade	<a href="#">Newsela</a>	Newsela provides teachers with access to non-fiction texts at different independent reading levels paired with activities. Includes news articles, science pieces, and social studies pieces. Where indicated, texts can be translated from English to Spanish <b>Action Step:</b> Teachers can <a href="#">sign up</a> using a Google account (or any school email) and can add students using Google Classroom. Can be either teacher led or student driven.

Printable	Needs a teacher or adult	Languages	ELP and Grade Level	Resource	Description and Teacher Action Step
✓	Yes	English only	All proficiency levels All grades	<a href="#">Readworks</a>	Resources for supporting MLLs/ELLs with reading. Option to read an article a day, with specific collections for English learners. There are also additional resources to build and extend knowledge. Many stories are accompanied by audio. <b>Action Step:</b> Teachers can <a href="#">create a free account</a> and provide students with an access code. This resource is teacher led.
✓	No	Platform is in English  Resources can be customized into any language.	All proficiency levels All grades	<a href="#">Quizlet</a>	Teachers can search for or create vocabulary word sets. Students use the flashcard sets to review the words and then play games. Flashcards can be customized to include sentence frames, translations, visuals, etc. <b>Action Step:</b> Teachers can <a href="#">sign up</a> using a Google account (or any school account) and can add students using Google Classroom. Can be either teacher led or student driven.
✓	No	English Spanish French	All proficiency levels Elementary	<a href="#">Reading A - Z</a>	Leveled books, passages, and resources for students. <b>Action Step:</b> Does not require teacher sign up. Student driven.
✓	Yes	English Spanish French	All proficiency levels All grades	<a href="#">Voces Digital</a>	A collection of world language titles in Spanish, French, and ESL (Levels 1- 4). Includes audio and video, speaking exercises, interactive activities, assessments, differentiation, etc. "Complete curriculum" of WIDA-aligned materials. <b>Action Step:</b> Teachers can <a href="#">request full free access</a> to this resource. This resource is meant to be teacher led.
	No	Platform in Spanish and English  Audio narration in over 40 languages.	Beginner Early elementary	<a href="#">Unite for Literacy</a>	Free access to more than 400 original picture books, one fourth of them written in Spanish, with audio narrations in more than 40 languages. <b>Action Step:</b> Does not require teacher sign up. Student driven.

Printable	Needs a teacher or adult	Languages	ELP and Grade Level	Resource	Description and Teacher Action Step
✓	Yes	English only	Beginner All grade levels	<a href="#">Baltimore City ESOL lessons</a>	This is a public Google Drive folder containing lessons for full-day ESOL grades K- 12 in a variety of subject areas. Each lesson includes a suggested schedule, directions, and materials. <b>Action Step:</b> No sign up necessary. Teacher led or student driven (with the support of English-speaking adult or peer).
	No	English Spanish	Beginning to intermediate Early elementary	<a href="#">The Spanish Experiment</a>	Free children's stories read aloud in both English and Spanish (accompanied by illustrations and text). <b>Action Step:</b> Does not require teacher sign up. Student driven.
	No	English only	Beginner to intermediate All grades	<a href="#">BrainPOP ELL</a>	Proficiency-based English learning program focused on vocabulary, grammar, listening, reading, and writing. High engagement and interactive. <b>Action Step:</b> Teachers can currently <a href="#">sign up</a> for free unlimited access and then provide students with a code. Can be teacher led or student driven.
✓	Yes	English only	Intermediate to advance All grades	<a href="#">NYC DOE Learn at Home</a>	The materials on the Learn at Home pages are designed to provide supplementary learning resources to students. Includes social studies and science activities, and work on math problems. The materials on the grade-specific pages below include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested daily study schedules</li> <li>• Guides and materials for instructional activities</li> <li>• Recommended educational television shows</li> <li>• Links to a variety of books, magazines, and websites on a wide range of topics that appeal to children at all ages</li> </ul> <b>Action Step:</b> No sign up necessary. Teacher or another adult must lead.
	No	English only	Intermediate to advanced Secondary	<a href="#">Townsend Press Learning Center</a>	Townsend Press Learning Center for developing literacy skills (focused on vocabulary and grammar development). <b>Action Step:</b> Teachers can <a href="#">sign up</a> and then provide students with an access code. Can be teacher or student led.
✓	No	English only	Intermediate to advance Secondary	<a href="#">Story Corps</a>	Short listening clips of authentic stories told by the people who lived them. Clips are accompanied by a transcript, related article, and in some cases, animated video. <b>Action Step:</b> Does not require teacher sign up. Student driven.

Printable	Needs a teacher or adult	Languages	ELP and Grade Level	Resource	Description and Teacher Action Step
	No	Over 59 languages	Intermediate to advanced All grades	<a href="#">International Children's Digital Library</a>	Free access to more than 4,000 books in a wide variety of different languages. <b>Action Step:</b> Does not require teacher sign up. Student driven with the support of an adult.
	No	English Spanish French	Intermediate to advanced All grades	<a href="#">BrainPOP Jr. K-3rd</a> <a href="#">BrainPOP 3rd-8th</a> <a href="#">BrainPOP (3rd-8th Spanish)</a> <a href="#">BrainPOP (3rd-8th French)</a>	Recommended for MLLs/ELLs because of the use of visuals, audio, closed captions, and multi-modal interactive resources. High engagement, interactive online platform focused on a wide variety of topics (STEM, Social Studies, etc.). <b>Action Step:</b> Teachers can currently <a href="#">sign up</a> for free unlimited access and then provide students with a code. Can be teacher led or student driven.