



Supporting Dual Language Learners RFTS

Preschool/Pre-K Illustrated Classroom Readiness Checklist

More and more children in classrooms across our country today are raised in homes where a language other than English is spoken. We call these children **dual language learners (DLLs) because they are learning and developing in two (or more) languages, their home language and English.** Dual language learners are the fastest growing segment of the school population. As teachers and program leaders, we must keep up with this changing landscape and address the educational and developmental needs of ALL children, including DLLs. The foundation you provide to dual language learners and all children will greatly impact their development and well-being.

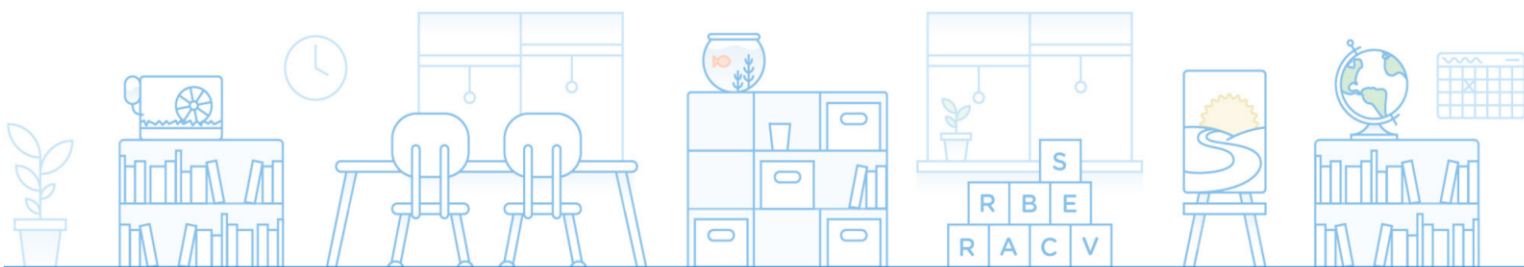
The more you know about the development of dual language learners and how to support their language and culture, the more confident you will feel in your interactions with them and their families, so you can work together to build a strong foundation for language and literacy, one that takes into account their culture and heritage. Young children are very capable of learning more than one language at the same time and bilingualism has great benefits for children in all areas of development. Supporting the home language and culture of dual language learners is a must. You can do this, even if you do not speak the child's home language!



This checklist is intended to help you and your program prepare to serve dual language learners and their families effectively. You can use it to assess your current practices, policies, and procedures and to reflect on areas where you might want to grow or acquire new skills. Use this tool as a guide for completing the final sections of your Classroom Language Plan. It can also serve as a tool to identify strengths and areas for improvement, establish program goals, track improvement efforts, and plan professional development opportunities.

The Checklist is divided into the following sections:

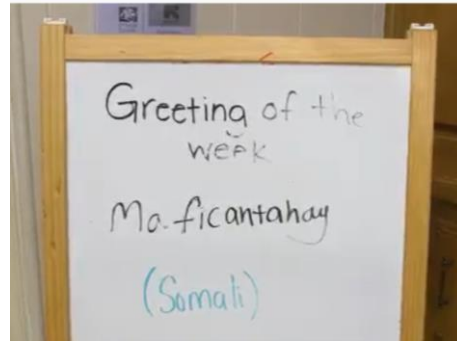
Language and Cultural Awareness
Physical Environment (Visuals and Learning Materials)
Teacher/Child Interactions and Instruction
Planning

- ***The document that follows is a version of this checklist with specific ideas for many of the components. A blank version of this checklist is available for your own reflection and planning.***



	Ideas
LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AWARENESS <i>We take time to learn more about DLLs and their families.</i>	
All families complete a <i>Family Language and Culture Survey</i> .	<i>*Tip: Make sure the teacher reads these surveys thoroughly to inform the classroom language plan. If some surveys are in Spanish and the teacher does not speak Spanish, it is important to get them translated before completing the classroom language plan.</i>
Based on the surveys, we complete a <i>Classroom Language Plan</i> , and use this information to identify existing and needed resources to make the classroom ready for DLLs.	
We are aware of each child's language, culture, and country of origin.	
We use the acquired knowledge and information obtained to make classroom/program ready and welcoming for DLLs and their families.	 <p><i>This teacher posted photos from the countries represented by her children. You might even post pictures of buildings from the countries represented in your block area and encourage children to model their block structures after the photos. "Carlos is from Mexico. Look, here is a house in Mexico. Let's build a Mexican house together. How could we build it?"</i></p> <p><i>See more ideas below.</i></p>
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT <i>We create an environment that welcomes all.</i>	
Visuals	
Photographs of the children and families are visible throughout the classroom.	 <p><i>Family wall display in classroom</i></p>

Welcome signs and messages in the different languages are present (in classroom and throughout site).



Greeting of the week board at the entry of a site: All classrooms use this greeting during their morning greeting song



This is a chart near the door with each child's face, what country they are from, and how to say hello. Note that the hellos written out phonetically, in English, rather than in the actual language so that the teacher can best pronounce them. With this support in place, the teacher can greet each child in their home language when they arrive.



All co-constructors are encouraged to greet families in their home language. They can keep a small visual of the various languages represented for their own reference.

Picture schedule is posted and labeled in English and Spanish or other languages of the children.



Small Groups/Grupos pequeños



Centers/Centros



Here is an example of a portion of a visual schedule. Strong visual schedules include photographs and labels in English and the home languages represented in the classroom. It's ideal if the photographs are ones of the actual children in the classroom. Visual schedules are most helpful when they are interacted with regularly. It can be helpful to have a clip or some kind of marker that can be moved down or across the schedule as the day moves along. Some teachers have "schedule keeper" as a classroom job.

Cognate charts reflecting similarities between languages are visible.


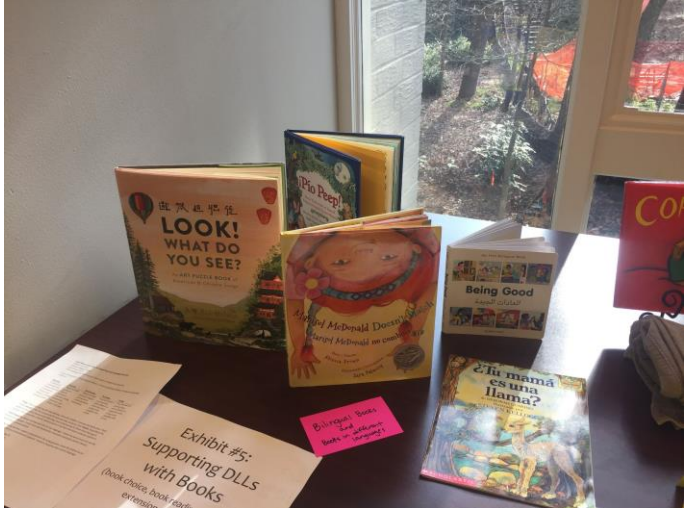
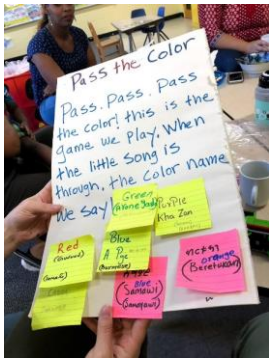


This teacher placed a cognate chart of animal name words that are similar in English and Spanish in his block area. The teacher uses this chart to make connections between the languages when playing alongside children in the block area where there is a big basket of plastic animals.

Children's artwork with labels and dictation in first languages is visible.



Armando's drawing of "My name and rocks."

Learning Materials	
<p>Books (self-made or other) with authentic images (photos) reflect the culture(s) of the children and families.</p>	 <p>Here is a display of “¿Quién Soy? (Who Am I?)” books children made with their families. Children can share with each other and learn more about one another’s families and favorite foods and activities.</p>
<p>Books in children’s first languages are present.</p>	 <p>The Rollins Rhyme Collection on Cox includes songs, rhymes and finger plays in Spanish. Check out mamalisa.com for songs in various languages.</p>
<p>Music/songs/ rhymes/ in the children’s first languages and reflective of their culture are included.</p>	 <p>Here is an example of a teacher who learned a few words in each language represented by her children to include in a favorite song/activity “Pass the Color.” They sit in a circle and pass around balls and when the song ends, whoever is holding the balls identifies the color and the teacher makes connections to the word for that color in the various languages. She didn’t memorize the color words. Instead, she would keep this chart with her to help her remember.</p>

Real or realistic materials, e.g., dolls, menus, magazines, clothing, food packaging, cooking utensils, and tools in the dramatic play area reflect the children's languages and cultures.



This teacher asked families to bring in food packages and other kitchen items from their home to include in the dramatic play area. Look how Julie responds to these items. She knew just what to do with these cornhusk wraps for tamales.



Art supplies from different cultures are available in art area.

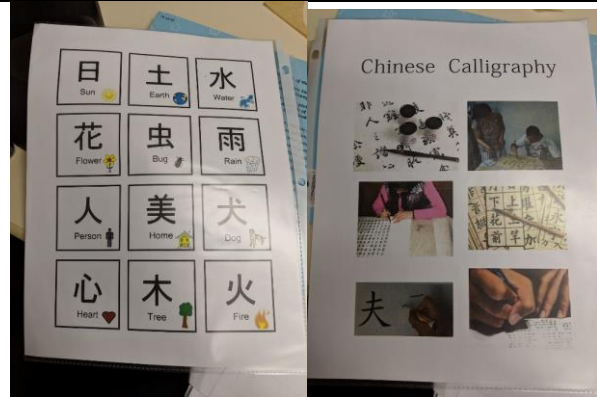
Example idea: In one class, Francis' family was Zomi Burmese. His mother is a seamstress. She brought in scraps of fabric they could use to make collages in the art area.

Manipulatives, e.g., puzzles, reflect the classroom's cultural and linguistic diversity.

Lakeshore "All Kind of Families" puzzle set:



Writing center contains writing models and materials that reflect the children's different languages.



These posters, paintbrushes, and black paint were placed in the writing center for children to interact with.

TEACHER/CHILD INTERACTIONS AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS

Ideas

Teachers engage with children throughout the day in meaningful back and forth conversations, in English and first languages.

Rich vocabulary, including focus words, is used by teachers in English and first language.

Teachers make consistent connections between English and the child's first language.



This teacher posted a cognate chart of words that are similar in English and Spanish in his block area where he keeps plastic animals. This provides a tool for him to help make connections between English and Spanish when playing with these animals alongside children.

All language used by children (English and first language) is acknowledged and valued by teachers.

Teachers provide additional wait time for children responses.

Teacher builds on children's responses.

If there is a bilingual teacher in classroom, he/she uses the first language intentionally for instructional purposes.



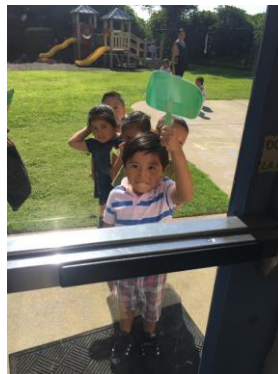
On Mondays, the bilingual, Spanish-speaking teacher reads the anchor/focus book for that week in a small group with all the Spanish speaking children before the book is introduced in whole group in English. In this way, these DLLs get a preview of the content that sets them up for success in the large group setting.

**It is key that the teacher use his/her language for instructional purposes and not solely for directing behavior.*


Props, gestures, and visuals are used consistently to support meaning (during conversations, transitions, stories, large and small group activities)



Here Ms. Rosario's small group retells the story of Oscar is Cold using props she brought from home (her daughter's stuffed animal, a campfire made of red and yellow paper, etc.)



Dylan holds up a visual with a picture of his class lining up to encourage everyone to gather to return inside from outdoor play.

<p>Teacher, staff member, volunteer, or parent reads books to children in their first language</p>	<p><i>Maria is the mother of twin girls in Pre-K. Maria and her girls are from Guatemala and speak Spanish. She visits the school during center time each Thursday and spends half of the hour of center time in one daughter's class and the other half in her other daughter's classroom. In each room, she sits in the library area with a pile of books in Spanish and reads one-on-one with Spanish-speaking children. When books in Spanish aren't available, she just talks about the pictures in the English books using Spanish.</i></p> <p><i>Local high schools may have students willing to volunteer who speak the same languages as the children in your classroom.</i></p> <p><i>*During the pandemic when such visits are not possible, parents might volunteer to read books aloud in Spanish and send the recordings to the teacher who could include them in their listening area. Make sure you help parents think about a cue to turn the page (like clapping).</i></p>
<p>Teacher(s) scaffolds/supports language. Examples (<i>at least two are observed</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <input type="checkbox"/> Asks simple yes/no questions or questions with limited choices, e.g., is it ____ or ____? - <input type="checkbox"/> Models answer for child - <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a phonemic clue - <input type="checkbox"/> Uses gestures - <input type="checkbox"/> Uses first language - <input type="checkbox"/> Uses visuals (diagram, chart, picture). - <input type="checkbox"/> Uses props, materials, or objects - <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ 	
<p>PLANNING</p>	<p>Ideas</p>
<p>Evidence of intentional grouping for small group instruction with individual language needs of children in mind.</p>	<p><i>Ms. Jones places Adriana with Lupe (both Spanish speakers) in the small group math activity as Adriana has more proficiency with English and can be a good model for Lupe.</i></p>
<p>Evidence of intentional grouping for small group instruction to provide opportunities for same-language speakers to interact.</p>	<p><i>Group children who speak Arabic for a small group activity and include a few of the key words for understanding the concept in Arabic. You can learn to pronounce these words by listening to them on Google translate.</i></p>
<p>Evidence of an integrated curriculum around an anchor book – activities throughout the day tie back to the book.</p>	 <p>Here is Jazmin making snow after reading <i>Snowy Day</i> by Ezra Jack Keats.</p>