

## Open response questions

1. You are the principal of a middle school in Massachusetts. A parent, whose family moved here from Puerto Rico six months ago, comes to see you about her daughter. The child is receiving bilingual support in Spanish from an aide who translates content material into Spanish. She also receives English Language support every day. The mother believes her daughter should not be learning in Spanish, because she will slip behind in English.

- Defend your decision to provide first language support, with reference to the research that underlies this kind of instruction.
- Refer to the legal precedents that exist to make bilingual education available for English learners in American schools.

2. You are a monolingual ELL teacher. Each day you work with a Korean 6<sup>th</sup> grader, who has been in the US for only 6 months. Although you are aware from discussions with the bilingual teacher that he can speak some English and understands more than he seems able to say, when he is with you he is very quiet.

- Why is he reluctant to speak?
- What would encourage him to speak more?
- Name some strategies you would use to help him become more comfortable with talking in English.
- Would it be beneficial for him to talk more?

3. A science teacher in your school has some concerns about the English Language Learners in his class. He has asked for your advice on how he might do a better job in his classroom. In a memo:

- Explain how students learn a second language, using your theoretical knowledge of SLA
- Describe some specific strategies he can use to make sure the needs of ESL students are met, according to your understanding of the classroom application of SLA principles.

4. Your principal would like you to review some new ESL textbooks. She has noticed some focus heavily on grammar while others look more like modified classroom textbooks with stories, pictures and activities. Whichever book is finally chosen is to be used in the content classroom as a basic English text. She gives you two books which are reflective of these differences, and asks you to write a memo in which you justify for the faculty which book is a better choice and why. In this memo:

- Describe the history of ESL methods
- Defend your selection of one text over the other.

5. A Chinese family has just moved to your area. The 15-year old boy and his 17-year old sister enroll in the regional high school, which has had no experience with non-English speaking students. You, as an experienced teacher in a multicultural setting, have been invited to a staff meeting. You hear a presentation from the teachers who work with these students. The math and science teachers say that they are well above grade level, whereas the English and social studies teachers say they sit in class looking round, daydreaming, doodling and chatting between themselves. In your opinion:

- Why are these students behaving the way they do?
- What would your advice to the school be?

6. A Massachusetts 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher has begun to realize that standardized assessments, such as MCAS, are not an efficient way of testing the knowledge of her English Language Learners, who come from various language backgrounds. You are a colleague of hers, and you have just completed your teacher certification in ELL. She asks for your advice on different forms of assessment that she could investigate.

- Explain the disadvantages and advantages of the standardized test.
- What other forms of assessment would you recommend and why.
- How would you defend your alternative assessment choices if asked to do so by parents and the principal of your school.

7. Compare and contrast the Grammar-Translation and the Natural Approach methods of teaching English. What are the main features of these approaches? In your opinion, with your knowledge of SLA, which method would be most likely to enhance the communicative competence of the learners, and why.

