Strategic Grouping for Home Language Supports

Description of resource and intended audience:

The various strategies below allow students at different language proficiency levels to engage in a variety of discussion formats in order to develop disciplinary practices and knowledge of the subject matter through interactive oral language development. Using a wide range of discussion formats in a classroom allows for equitable opportunities to participate regardless of proficiency level, and also values multilingualism as an asset for learning.

Materials needed: Varies depending on activity.

Approximate time needed: Varies depending on activity.

Instructions:

See chart on page 2.
## Strategic Grouping for Home Language Supports

<table>
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<th>Grouping By...</th>
<th>Opportunities and Rationale</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
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| **Same L1**            | • **Small group instruction**: These are valuable opportunities for the teacher to instruct in the students' L1, when possible  
                          • **Processing new content presented in English** (e.g. Turn and Talks): Students have an opportunity to paraphrase, ask questions, and discuss with a partner in their L1  
                          • **Pre-work activities** (e.g. creating drafts): Students can express initial ideas and share background knowledge in native language before they are expected to share final ideas in English | Avoid grouping students solely by L1  
                          Strategically switch student partnerships throughout the year so that students benefit from working with peers with varying language and content strengths |
| **Mixed Languages**    | • **Classroom Seating Arrangement**: Students sit in mixed language groups in order to collaborate and socialize with peers from a variety of cultures and languages  
                          • **Building and Accessing Background Knowledge** (Gallery walk or KWL chart): Students can share what they know in their L1 and/or English | In mixed language groups, try to have at least one bilingual student who can interpret and support students with beginning English skills |
| **Proficiency in English** | • **Small Group or partner projects where task is in English**: Teacher mixes students so that native English speakers and students with higher English proficiency can support students with lower and intermediate English proficiency. | Teacher must have students' current language proficiency data available  
                          Be careful not to match students who are at opposite ends of language proficiency  
                          Newcomers can be placed in group of 3 |
| **Proficiency in Content Area** | • **Small Group Projects where product is in English or L1**: Students collaborate to generate and work with new content in English or L1 according to their needs and strengths. | Students should be given freedom to determine how to organize and represent the new learning and and language support as needed. |
| **Student Choice**     | • **Fun activities**: Students may choose to work with peers whose L1 and/or English proficiency levels are different than their own so these students can explore shared interests. | Behavior could be an issue; the teacher has the last word |

**Notes:**