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Wida speaking practice

your MLS need help with WIDA ACCESS? Every year when WIDA ACCESS speaking tests come in, your anticipation for raised scores are high, but inevitably, your hopes are dashed. Year after year you notice your students' scores are not getting any higher. I know I have pulled my hair out in the past because my MLs were having trouble passing the WIDA Speaking Test. Luckily, I came upon some solutions. I have found ways to help my Multilingual Learners (ML) pass this portion of the WIDA ACCESS speaking test. I found myself giving all of my groups the same tips and tricks on how to improve their scores. Some examples of these tips were: Your teacher does not score your test. The scorers are teachers from all over the country who do not know you. So, they only have this one recording of your voice in which they judge your speaking ability. Nina is a voice actor, so she is a professional speaker. Don't be too freaked out by Nina. She is there to help you hear how much and how well you are supposed to speak. You should be matching Nina's clarity and fluency as well as the amount of words and time she is taking. You should take notes as to what to say, but don't write a script. Reading from a script sounds unnatural, and the scorers are listening for natural speech patterns. If you want to offer your students more, check out the video I made called Tips and Tricks to Show Progress on WIDA ACCESS Speaking Test. It saves you time and your voice from repeating the same phrases through all your classes. Something else I think is very important for MLs for the WIDA speaking test is to give them a mnemonic device to help them remember what to include in their answers to academic speaking questions. I went online and by clicking on "mnemonic devices" I was able to find a lower level mnemonic device that would be helpful for my students. I created a mnemonic device for writing responses to academic speaking questions. I created acronyms that might be the one MLs are used to in writing (RACES). Instead of RACES, I created SASHES. SASHES for Speaking = Say the question in sentence form. Analyze all parts of the prompt. Structure your answer with transitions and conjunctions. H = Hold the floor or keep talking. Explain everything. Be clear. S = Sum it up. Restate the question in a new way. Activities to Go with Each Step of SASHES = Say the question in sentence form (SQS) Play around with jokes. Have your students say the joke question in a statement instead. For example, "Why did the chicken cross the road?" The chicken crossed the road because... What is nice about this activity, is it gives students practice with the different question words: who, what, where, when, why, and how. This could lend itself to both lower and upper proficiency levels. In the activities I created, I played with these even further by using anti-jokes. Anti-jokes are deliberately unfunny. A = Analyze all parts of the prompt For this step the best thing you can do is give a lot of opportunities to practice. This step applies to both speaking and writing prompts, so try to collect prompts that work for both RACES and SASHES. Before multilingual learners can successfully answer a constructed-response such as those found on the ACCESS, they need to know how the prompts/questions work. I like Kelly Gallagher's strategy called the ABCs and D of On Demand Writing adapted from Teaching Adolescent Writers. We will focus on the "A" or "Attack the Prompt". In this strategy, Gallagher describes the process as: Cross out the words "Write a composition" in the prompt. Crossing these words out helps us prune the prompt, reducing the chances of becoming distracted. Circle any words that ask you to do something. (In the sample prompt you would circle "discuss," "share," and "support." This shows us that the prompt is asking for three things, not just one and helps avoid the problem of only partially answering the prompt. Draw an arrow from each circled word those words are what we need to make sure we address in our response. Under the prompt, rewrite and number the words that you wrote. Next, underline the words that you wrote. Rewrite what you wrote. Now, you have a list of words that you need to make sure you address in your response. The last step in teaching students to use transitions and conjunctions. My favorite way to teach this is the improvisation game "Yes, and..." The idea of this game is to keep the conversation going by always agreeing with the person before you, then adding on to their thought. You can see how this can lead to stretching of the answers. I always tell my students that teacher don't want them to use run-on sentences when they write, but for the ACCESS test, we do want run-on sentences when speaking. "Yes, and..." promotes this run-on mentality. Alternatively, you could play "Yes, but..." with the next student adding a contrary statement to the one before. Three rules for the game: The sentences should match each other in context, or "go together". They should definitely all help build an elaborate situation. The story should have a problem or multiple problems. In fact, the best Yes, and... stories have one problem build upon the next with possible solutions along the way. The story ends at a natural conclusion, when all the problems have been addressed, and the final solution is satisfying. Some sample story starters for "Yes, and..." or "for Yes, but..." are: Suddenly, icy fingers grabbed my arm as I inched through the darkness. I suddenly found out that I was heir to a throne.... She opened the letter and it said she'd won \$100,000. When I flipped on the radio that night, I couldn't believe the voice I heard coming through the speakers. I still remember the day I was born. 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I like to create anchor charts with signal words/phrases for my students to use in their speaking (and writing). Therefore, here is a list of some sentence starters to use for conclusion sentences: In summary... To conclude... Thus... To summarize... In short... In conclusion... To sum up... To end with... Finally... Lastly... On the whole... As a result... If you like the idea of having signal words/phrases anchor charts ready for you, click the image below to see what I created. WIDA-style Speaking Practices Finally, I have created a set of 60 wida style speaking practices for you to print, rewrite and number the words that you wrote. Next, underline the words that you wrote. Rewrite what you wrote. Now, you have a list of words that you need to make sure you address in your response. The last step in teaching students to use transitions and conjunctions. My favorite way to teach this is the improvisation game "Yes, and..." 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