

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

HANDBOOK

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES



أكاديمية جيمز العالمية - دبي
GEMS World Academy
DUBAI

CIS WE ARE AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL

GEMS EDUCATION



The EAL Team aims to empower students to learn the English skills necessary to function academically, thrive socially, and grow as multilingual global citizens.

- EAL Mission Statement

Our 9 PYP English as an Additional Language (EAL) teachers are: Zahra Hadi, Angela Clark, Duncan Kaiser, Krista McInnis, Martine Bayard, Ben Lee and Natasha Boyle, Theresa Hull and Alex Van't Hof.

The English as an Additional Language (EAL) program at GEMS World Academy (GWA) recognises the contribution of international students to the education of all students. In the context of our rapidly changing world, the interaction between students of different geographical, national, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds provides the basis for future understanding and cooperation. The common task of learning English as an additional language unites EAL students in their academic pursuits and at the same time provides them with the skills to interact with the larger English-speaking community of the world.

The EAL program encourages students' own individualities and appreciation of their own culture and language, while giving them the skills they need to fully

INTRODUCTION

benefit from the learning opportunities available in the larger school community. The EAL program develops both basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiencies (CALP) so that the students will be capable of working in the language of the classroom and curriculum.

BICS are language skills needed to interact in social situations, for example, when speaking to a friend on the telephone. and refers primarily to context-bound, face-to-face communication which is used in everyday social interaction. CALP refers to more abstract, decontextualized, communication that takes place in the classroom, starting in elementary grades. CALP involves the "language of learning", which enables children to problem-solve, hypothesize, imagine, reason and project into situations with which they have no personal experience. It is a prerequisite for learning to read and write and for overall academic success. The implications of the BICS and CALP concepts for children are that the language of instruction needs to be sufficiently well developed for her or him to be able to meet the cognitive demands of the academic setting. Students typically are thought to acquire BICS within about two years of initial exposure to a new language but take at least five years to develop the CALP needed to be on the same level with their native speaking counterparts in the classroom.

The EAL program at GWA is for students who need extra support to effectively use the English language. In this program, students are provided with intensive instruction in listening, speaking, reading, writing and comprehending English. This

intensive English language instruction is delivered by highly qualified EAL teachers who are trained in recognising and working with language differences. Students who are learning or still improving their English also receive support from teachers and teaching assistants in the regular classroom.

Therefore, all teaching staff of English Language Learners at GWA share a common commitment to the development of the language skills of EAL students. GWA's EAL program adheres to the national goals developed by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). There are three goals for limited English proficient students in GWA's EAL program:

To use English to communicate in social settings.

To use English to achieve academically in all content areas.

Our EAL team is made up of highly qualified educators who work together as a cohesive group, sharing their knowledge and expertise within their fields to support each other and to meet the needs of students at GWA.

Here is some more information on our team of EAL teachers:

OUR EAL TEAM

GWA'S EAL TEAM



Duncan Kasier: I have been teaching for fourteen years and have experience across the age levels and in a variety of curricula. I have previously worked in the UK and Thailand and am now beginning my

sixth year at GWA. I enjoy using technology in education to make the learning engaging and creative and have a strong interest in building students' thinking skills alongside the academic knowledge.



Martine Bayard: My name is Martine Bayard and I come from Canada. I have a bachelor's degree in teaching English as Another Language and I have been teaching for 22 years, mostly in French and English schools, working

in immersion programs. This is my second experience in an international school. I worked in China for 2 years, where I taught EAL. I am very pleased to start my fifth year at GWA.



Zahra Hadi: Born in California and raised in Hong Kong, I earned a Bachelor of Arts in French Language and Linguistics and a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction. I most recently

moved from Houston, where I taught English, Language Arts and Social Studies in bilingual and ESL programs. I have enjoyed working and traveling throughout the world, and I am looking forward to my third year as part of the EAL team at GWA-Dubai.



Angela Clark: Hello! I am originally from Wheaton, Illinois and I have a Bachelor's degree in Music Education and a Master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language.

I have experience teaching Music, Humanities and EAL to children in preschool through grade 8. I believe that incorporating music and movement can enhance language learning; especially in young learners. Therefore, my classes often involve singing, moving, acting, performing and creating as ways to engage further with speaking, listening, reading and writing.



Ben Lee: I was born and raised in a small town in Canada. I received my degree in Canada and my teaching credentials in the United States. I am currently completing my Master's degree in

Teaching English as a Second Language. Most recently I have served as an EAL teacher and homeroom teacher for Grades 3 and 4 in an international school in China. The remainder of my teaching career was in Belgrade, Serbia.



Theresa Hull: Theresa taught in Canada and Kuwait. She teaches grades 9 and 10 at GWA. Currently, she is an examiner for the IB and is working on her Master's in English.



Krista McInnis: I come from Canada and my family and I are settling in to our 8th year in the Middle East. I have a Masters degree in Teaching English as Another Language. I am also certified in adult language instruction. I've taught English to students

of all ages in South Korea, Canada, Doha and Dubai. I enjoy teaching students at all levels of language proficiency. The best part of teaching English is seeing students transfer their knowledge and skills and become active participants in their classes.



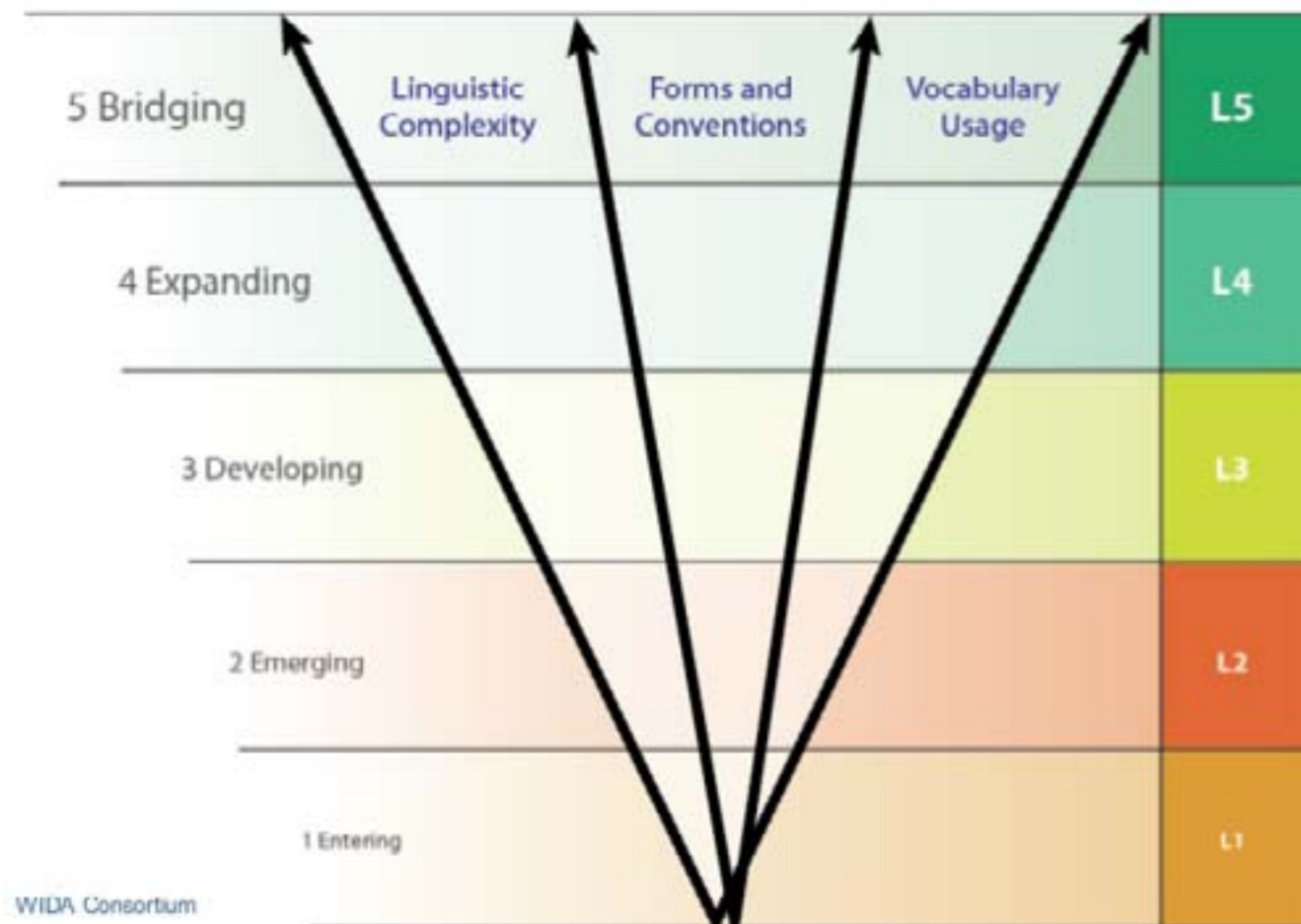
Natasha Vrutska: Natasha has an Master's degree in English from Tavrida National University and an MA in Education from George Mason University. She has previously taught in the U.S. and in South

Korea. In her 5th year at GWA, she is currently teaching Grades 7 and 8.



Alex Van t'Hof: has a BA and Master's degree in English from Leiden University and has taught English in five countries at secondary and at university levels. Speaking five languages, he is also an official translator and has been the team leader for the Secondary EAL Department.

IDENTIFYING EAL



ALL STUDENTS APPLYING for admission to GWA are screened to see if any support is needed through English as an Additional Language (EAL). If Admissions screening determines that a student may need EAL support, then a full English Assessment (WIDA) is administered to determine the specific level of EAL support required. Parents are then notified that EAL support will be needed in order to help their child access the English curriculum. Our primary assessment tool - called WIDA - can be administered up to three times a year and places students into one of 5 proficiency levels based on their abilities in reading, writing, speaking and listening. EAL support is an extra service that costs 3750 AED per semester across both divisions, Elementary and Secondary.

SUPPORT IN ELEMENTARY

INTENSIVE PULL-OUT, LANGUAGE PULL-OUT, IN-CLASS SUPPORT & MONITORING.

GWA's EAL Elementary Department offers four kinds of support for students.

Intensive Pull-Out

This support is for learners who are very new to English and cannot use or understand much English. These students spend the majority of their day in their regular classroom but are pulled out three times a day - normally during Arabic classes and during Language periods. These students often score a 1 or a 2 on

the WIDA proficiency scale.

Language Pull-Out

This support is for students who can access some of the English language but still need help to access the language of their grade's curriculum. They speak in English but make some errors that hinder communication. These students often score a 2 or 3 on the WIDA proficiency scale.

In-Class Support

In-class support happens when EAL teachers go to students in their mainstream class and help them with language usage, activities, and summative tasks. These students often score 3 or higher on the WIDA proficiency scale. At GWA we usually support students at this level for one full academic year and then their classroom teacher becomes primarily responsible for supporting and differentiating.

Monitoring

After students 'exit' our EAL program we keep their names and assessment information on our roster for up to one year. Although these students no longer need EAL support, we periodically check in with teachers to ensure students are thriving academically and have no setbacks as they start to independently access the English curriculum.

EAL Exit Process

In order to be considered for exit from the pull-out program, students must score an overall 3 or above in the EAL Exit Assessment in all four language strands:

- Oral Assessment
- Listening Assessment
- Reading Assessment
- Writing Assessment

Most students require a full year of intensive pull-out support but some exit in just one semester while others may need support for up to two years.

Our language program at GWA-Dubai is structured around the belief that "every teacher is a language teacher" and is capable of providing high-quality, differentiated language teaching to all of their students. For this reason, EAL students are only pulled out of their classrooms in the early stages of their English learning. Learners usually exit back to their mainstream classes when we see that their English is "Developing - Stage 3" (For Elementary) or "Expanding - Stage 4" (for Secondary). At this point they are capable of working with limited support inside the mainstream classroom.



SUPPORT IN SECONDARY

LANGUAGE A, LANGUAGE B AND IN-CLASS SUPPORT

GWA's EAL Secondary Department has been making some changes to their departmental policy and program, to be implemented in Fall 2016.

For English Language Acquisition (2016-2017) the most significant change is that students will attend both ELA (English B) and English Language and Literature (ELL/English A) classes throughout the year. The points below list the changes to the ELA structure and the requirements of the Middle Year Program (MYP) ELA student:

- The ELA course will be taught for 5 out of 8

periods in a 10-day cycle in the ELA classroom.

- The ELA students will complete all requirements of the MYP by taking the following courses with their peers: Mathematics, Sciences, English Language and Literature, Individuals and Societies, Physical and Health Education, Art, and Design.

- The ELA students will complete the requirements of the ministry by taking the Arabic Language Acquisition course.

- The ELA students will focus fully on English Language Acquisition without the need to take Spanish or French as their Language Acquisition option.

- The English Language and Literature (ELL) course will be supported by both the ELL and the ELA teachers in the ELL classroom.

This method of teaching English in the MYP at GWA will ensure that all ELA students will receive additional reinforcement of listening, speaking, reading and writing English in the smaller, slower-paced ELA classrooms while still being able to participate to varying extents in the ELL classes.

Once a student has made the required progress through the phases of ELA in the MYP, transition out of the ELA class becomes feasible. Students will then select Spanish or French to replace the hours of ELA they no longer require. There is no need to transition to ELL as students are already in the required course.



The changes for the 2016-2017 school year will mean that all MYP students take the required Language and Literature course, regardless of language proficiency, along with the MYP ELA course. This change is appropriate for an international school considering the vast number of languages spoken at varying levels of proficiency within school.

EAL ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

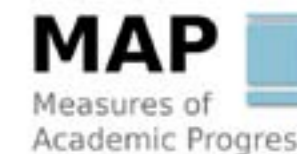
HOW WE SHOW WHAT THEY KNOW

Assessment and reporting for EAL is the responsibility of the EAL teacher and the homeroom teacher. All students are assessed twice a year for language proficiency using our formal testing tool (called the WIDA). EAL students also participate in regular testing and leveling that is part of the GWA-Dubai's assessment calendar.

MAP TESTING: MAP is an acronym for Measures of Academic Progress and GWA students from Grades 1 - 9 are tested several times a year on Reading, Language Use, and Math. EAL teachers and homeroom teachers use the data from MAP testing to help them in creating lessons that are appropriate and differentiated.

GWA'S LANGUAGE CONTINUUM: Three times a year the EAL teacher will fill out the language continuum for students receiving pull-out support. Homeroom teachers will fill out the continuum for students who receive in-class support or are being monitored. The teacher who spends the most contact time during language lessons is responsible for assessing and reporting.

OTHER LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS: There are several other ways for teachers and parents to see and to track student progress. EAL students will have their reading, comprehension and vocabulary/spelling tested several times a year through **PM Benchmarks** and **Words Their Way**. Although most of these assessments are used in Elementary, Secondary teachers also use an assessment called the **SRI** - an online reading inventory.



GWA'S MOTHER TONGUE PROGRAM

RECOGNIZING CULTURE AND HOME LANGUAGE

The Mother Tongue Program supports students who cannot be provided with formal tuition in their mother tongue during school hours. Research shows that the development of the student's mother tongue or first language (usually the language spoken at home) is critical for their cognitive development; children who have not fully developed a first language can experience language-based cognitive difficulties later on. GWA recognizes how important mother tongue is and is working to support the native languages of students. Students may be fluent in their mother tongue however it is essential that they are also provided with the opportunity to become literate in their first language. The level of competence a student can achieve in their second language is directly dependent on the extent to which their literacy in the mother tongue has been developed. The student's sense of cultural and personal identity, and their self-esteem, is also greatly strengthened by mother tongue instruction.

GWA organises Mother Tongue classes outside the school curriculum using school facilities at the end of a regular school day. The lessons are taught by parents, CAS students or teachers with whom the parents enter into an agreement about participation. The Mother Tongue Coordinator (Melody Fisher) also assists in finding suitable teachers for these courses. There are currently mother tongue programs or after school activities for a number of languages including Italian, Dutch, French, Spanish and Arabic.

