





Through our own co-teaching practices, extensive professional learning, and instructional coaching experiences, as well as our decade-long research, we've identified three elements of successful, integrated collaborative instruction for ELLs in K–12 schools: (1) trust between co-teaching partners; (2) maintenance of the entire collaborative instructional cycle, which includes co-planning, co-teaching, co-assessment of student work, and reflection; and (3) leadership support.

Why is the entire collaborative cycle essential? Hopping on and off a bicycle might be a great way for a tourist to get around a new city to sightsee. But it doesn't work that way with the co-teaching tandem bike. It's unrealistic to expect teachers to meet their ELLs' linguistic, academic, and social-emotional needs if they spend their day hopping from classroom to classroom, attempting to deliver content and language instruction at multiple grade levels with different teachers.

Schools have a tendency to focus on co-teaching only. The danger here is that it may easily turn into a "push-in and pull-aside" scenario, in which the classroom merely offers shared classroom space without shared goals, shared instruction, and shared assessment. One of the concerns we

hear most frequently from educators is that the ESL teacher is relegated to the role of the helper who routinely has to ask, "What are we doing today?"

In contrast, when teachers put in place all four components of the collaborative instructional cycle—planning, teaching, assessment, and reflection—learning will flourish. The teachers have the opportunity to craft unit goals, lesson objectives, or learning targets with ELLs in mind.

They can gather resources and materials that supplement and support instruction. They can design differentiated units and lessons with ample scaffolding, and they can conduct

formative and summative assessments together. Jointly, they can monitor student progress in both language development and content attainment, analyzing student data and planning interventions as needed. And they can reflect on the teaching-learning process that took place in the class.

In this article, we focus on the first two parts of the collaborative instructional cycle: co-planning and co-teaching. But first let's explore the foundation of the entire cycle: trust.





developers, and coaches, we've documented seven co-teaching approaches that we refer to as models of instruction. We've organized them to show the grouping configuration the teachers choose—one group, two groups, or multiple groups—as well as the roles



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