

netTrekker news

In The Field

"I recently saw the excitement on a child's face when he could be included in an activity because he could read the resources in his native language on netTrekker d.i. He really felt like he was part of the class instead of feeling left out."

— Leslie Leduc, Instructional Technology Specialist/Online Specialist
Manatee County School District, FL



Finding Resources for ELL/ESL Students

Educators turn to the Web for information and resources to use with students who have diverse learning needs. For example, they can find effective classroom strategies and engaging standards-based activities for students who are English Language Learners.

Addressing the Needs

As the 2005-2006 school year began, the projected enrollment in K-12 schools was 54.6 million students, according to US Census Bureau data. Of these youngsters, 9.9 million aged 5 to 17 speak a language other than English at home. This is almost one out of every five students in this age group. Most of them (7.0 million) speak Spanish at home. The Web is a wonderful resource for them and for their teachers. Using netTrekker d.i., an academic search engine designed specifically to address ELL teaching and learning, they can find what they need quickly and easily.



Customized resources for ELL/ESL students

What Works

Research into language acquisition points to specific instructional strategies, and teachers can find information online about them. These methods include increasing comprehensibility and interaction, emphasizing thinking and study skills, and using a student's native language to promote understanding. Teachers can also find standards-based activities on the web that reinforce learning with nonverbal clues such as images, animations, and interactive environments that engage and instruct their students. Many of these were created or adapted for ELL students. A good way to find all of this information is to use netTrekker d.i. to search.

Search Strategies

In addition, netTrekker d.i. is the first place to go because it contains an entire section of resources devoted to ELL and teaching English as a second language. Information is available about skill development in reading and writing, critical thinking, listening, speaking, fluency and more. There are grammar guides and language translation tools and dictionaries. In addition, the Multicultural Pavilion offers resources about cultures, ethnic identities, cultural sensitivities, diversity issues, assimilation, and Spanish in everyday life.

The search engine allows easy access to more than 180,000 Web sites, many of which have been translated into multiple languages. These resources have all been pre-screened for educational value and have been given a readability measure based on Lexile ratings and eight other popular methods. Such detail helps teachers to target search results to a student's individual reading skills, locate grade level content at an appropriate reading level, and employ differentiated instruction. The Web sites were hand picked by educators, who identified the best ones for curriculum relevance and quality. In addition, each Web site supports state academic standards, including ELL standards.

netTrekker d.i. helps educators to refine searches so they can locate lesson plans, learning exercises, primary source documents, language-specific sites for ELL students, and more. When students use one of these sites, if they are unsure of what anything means, netTrekker d.i.'s Dictionary/Translation Hotkey provides the definition or translation to multiple languages for any word they select.