**ELL Module: Initial Thoughts Assignment**

Working with our English Language Learners (ELL) is just like working with our special needs, gifted students, speech students, or our regular education students. When working with our ELL students all teachers need to avoid making assumptions and generalizations. All students are not the same and they should not be treated the same. It is so important for teachers to get to know your students and their families. Our schools and classrooms need to be accommodating and foster a welcoming environment for our families. Bridging the gap between home and school is so important to build our families trusts and lasting relationships. With these relationships we, as teachers, are able to provide appropriate instruction and goals for our students and receive the necessary support from home. It is also important to provide differentiated instruction for our ELL students too. Differentiated instruction gives our ELL learners an opportunity to learn in our classes by giving them instruction at their level.

Differentiation is optimal for our ELL learners because it offers multiple options for taking in learning. Also, providing our learners with diversity is another great way for our students to see and be able to learn from other cultures. Along with differentiated instruction teachers should also activate their ELL students’ prior knowledge. This helps them grasp the concepts better and began to understand the language. We need to also incorporate language instruction into all of our content areas not just reading. Language is in everything we do and it is so important for our ELL students to learn. This also helps reinforce exposure to the vocabulary throughout the day in a variety of avenues. Also, giving our students a chance to practice their use of the English language is very important too.

Testing our ELL students can be very tricky since so many of our tests are standardized assessments. These tests are predominately filled with the English language, which many of our ELL students are not proficient in. Providing our students with informal testing measures can give our teachers a snapshot of the student’s classroom performance. An example of an informal assessment would be running records. Also, providing our ELL students with extra time and bilingual dictionaries can also be helpful because it provides our students with a chance to process what is being asked of them. These measures can level the playing field of learning for our ELL students.