

# SDAIE Overview

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SDAIE stands for Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English. SDAIE instruction is a methodology that synthesizes the best practices of content area teaching and language acquisition. It was developed to meet the needs of students with limited academic English skills, many of whom struggle to process verbal clues (spoken & written) without extra support. (Other terms for SDAIE are: Structured English Immersion, Content-based ELD, and Sheltered Instruction.)

SDAIE places special emphasis on various teaching strategies that provide contextual support for complex content area concepts and language. These teaching strategies are designed to provide students with: 1) scaffolded ways for understanding the target content, 2) comprehensible academic language that students acquire through various modeling and practice activities, and 3) ongoing feedback on how well they are learning the target content and language.

*SDAIE demands a high amount of each of the following:*

- Teacher communication behaviors** – Gestures, expressions, synonyms, restating, intonation, articulation, rate of speech
- Modeling** – Students need to see and hear many examples of modeled language, work, and behavior that exhibits target learning.
- Scaffolding** – Teacher must gradually release responsibility for performance of target learning, while supporting students as they assume responsibility and become independent at the task.
- Visuals and objects** – Visuals, photos, videos, objects, etc., can “paint a thousand words” and make the verbal/written academic language ten times more comprehensible
- Building up and Connecting to Background Knowledge** – Students need high amounts of pre-reading preparation, particularly with texts that include vocabulary, concepts, and themes to which they have not had much exposure.
- Authentic Assessment** – Teachers need to frequently check to make sure students are comprehending and provide feedback so they can make changes. (Thumbs up, quickwrites, etc.)
- Differentiated Instruction** – Teachers create ways to support different levels of language and learning within the same classroom.
- Using movement and multiple intelligences** – Teachers incorporate into their lessons various strategies that use movement, drama, music, art, and other intelligences to reinforce learning of content concepts and academic language.
- Cooperative Learning** – Students need to process and practice the language and concepts in order to own them. Pair and group work provides a format for communication and constructivist learning to happen.
- Building habits** of reading comprehension, academic thinking, test-taking, & studying – Students need to practice and acquire habits that good readers and students use automatically for success in various types of reading, studying, and assessments

## Resources:

Marzano, R. J. (2001) *Classroom Instruction that Works; Research-based strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*. ASCD

Gibbons, P. (2002) *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning: Teaching Second Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom*. Heinemann

O-Malley, J. M. (1996) *Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners*. Addison-Wesley

Stephens, E. C. (2000) *A Handbook of Content Literacy Strategies*. Christopher-Gordon Publishers