

Teacher Tool	Purpose	Teacher Tips	Examples
Supporting Directions	Help students follow classroom routines and tasks	Children with language difficulties often struggle with multi-step directions, even when routines are familiar. Use short, clear language. Repeat directions as needed, pair them with gestures or visuals, and break longer directions into smaller parts. Modeling the task first can also make expectations more concrete.	"First, get your folder. Next, sit on the carpet." Use picture cards to show each step. Point, gesture, or quickly model what students are expected to do.
Responsive Teacher Talk	Strengthen comprehension through everyday interactions	The way adults talk throughout the day matters. Use intentional, language-rich talk during routines, play, discussion, and instruction. Give students repeated opportunities to hear complex language in meaningful contexts, while also providing support such as sentence frames.	"I noticed you were comparing the two pictures. You could say, 'They are alike because...'" During science model, "The ice melted when it got warmer."
Wait Time	Give students time to process language	Some students need a few extra seconds to process a question, organize their thinking, and prepare a response. After asking a question, pause before repeating it or calling on another student. This small shift can greatly increase participation.	Ask, "Why do you think the character did that?" Then pause and allow time for thinking before expecting an answer.
Expand and Recast	Support students in using stronger language	When students use short or incomplete responses, expand what they say into a fuller sentence. When they make grammatical errors, model the correct form naturally without stopping the flow of conversation.	Student: "Dog run." Teacher: "Yes, the dog is running fast." S: "He goed home." T: "He went home."

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Asking Open Questions	Encourage deeper thinking and stronger responses	Open-ended questions invite students to explain, describe, predict, and reason. These questions create richer opportunities for language use than questions with one right answer.	"What do you notice?" "How do you know?" "Why do you think that happened?" "What might happen next?"
Diverse Language-Rich Classrooms	Build vocabulary and background knowledge	Vocabulary, oral language, and reading comprehension are closely connected. Explicitly teach important content words and create many opportunities for students to hear and use them across settings. Connect new learning to students' experiences to make meaning stick.	Teach the word predict during a read-aloud, then revisit it during science: "Can you predict what will happen next?" Link a story event to something familiar from students' lives.
Interactive Book Reading	Use books as a vehicle for language growth	Interactive read-alouds are a powerful way to build vocabulary, comprehension, and oral language. Pause to explain words, ask questions, and prompt discussion. Revisit texts so students can deepen their understanding over time.	During a read-aloud, stop and ask, "How is the character feeling? What makes you think that?" Re-read a page and spotlight a target word with a picture or gesture.
Linguistic Adaptation	Make academic words more accessible	Introduce unfamiliar words by linking them to simpler, familiar words students already know. Using synonyms, antonyms, and examples helps students build word knowledge more effectively.	When teaching ancient, connect it to "old" and "from a long time ago," and contrast it with "new" or "now" (Bridges et al., 2023).
Scaffolding Up and Down	Match support to student need	Some students need additional support to process and express ideas, while others are ready for more challenge. Adjust the language demand by simplifying, extending, or providing supports such as prompts and models.	Offer a frame such as "I think ___ because ___" for support. For more challenge, ask a student to explain their thinking using a target vocabulary word.

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Access to Visuals	Increase access to meaning	Visual supports reduce language load and help students understand, remember, and express ideas. Pair spoken language with pictures, icons, graphic organizers, gestures, or real objects whenever possible.	Use sequence cards for routines, a visual story map for retelling, or labeled images during vocabulary instruction.
Repetition	Strengthen memory and language learning	Students benefit from hearing important words, directions, and sentence structures many times across the day. Repetition supports comprehension, retention, and independent use.	Repeat a target word during morning meeting, small group, and read-aloud: "observe," "observing," "We are careful observers."
Sentence Frames for Elaboration	Help students say more	Sentence frames give students a structure for extending ideas, participating in discussions, and using more precise language. Over time, these supports can fade as students become more independent.	"I noticed ____." "I agree with ____ because ____." "The character felt ____ when ____."
Multiple Forms of Expression	Honor different ways of showing understanding	Language demands can make it hard for some students to fully show what they know. Allowing students to respond in different ways supports participation and reduces frustration.	Students might respond by speaking, pointing, drawing, acting, using visuals, or combining speech with a sentence frame.