

Foreword

Every year in this nation, hundreds of thousands of children enter kindergarten as “English language learners” coming from homes in which languages other than English are spoken and lacking the English skills needed to fully participate in and access the curriculum at school. Their young brains are wired to develop language, to use language in order to interact with others, and to learn about and codify the concepts that give the world meaning. Their teachers greet them with a curriculum meant to develop those language and early literacy skills and to set them on the path towards academic success. Yet, for many, it does not work out as it should.

Somewhere between 40–50 percent of these young English language learners begin what will be years of struggle to comprehend the instruction they are given in a language they don’t know, amassing increasing academic gaps. This journey seldom results in these students achieving the levels of English proficiency they need to be successful in college or the work force. They become what are called long-term English language learners.

The majority of English language learners in secondary grades (6–12) are long-term English language learners (L-TELLs)—having been in United States schools for more than six years, many born in this country—stuck in the journey towards English proficiency, and struggling to overcome academic gaps. Awareness of this group has existed “on the ground” for a while in some schools, but in most places the curriculum, policy, and programs provided to adolescent English language learners is designed either for newcomer English language learners or for a general population of struggling native English speakers. Because their basic social oral fluency in English can mask the very real weaknesses in their grasp of English, long-term English language learners are often overlooked as having language needs. They find themselves placed in mainstream classrooms, without the supports necessary to continue developing the English they need, unable to access grade-level academic content, or in intervention classes that misdiagnose their struggles as reading problems or undisciplined study habits. Years of struggling academically takes a toll well beyond the academic deficits that accrue. Discouragement and non-engagement become widespread.

In 2010, the policy research report *Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkept Promise of Educational Opportunity for California’s Long Term English Learners* was released. Based upon years of conducting inquiries into English language learner achievement challenges within secondary schools, and a statewide policy research study on the magnitude of the long-term English language learner phenomenon in California, the report provided a wake-up call for schools, districts, and states to attend to the needs of long-term English language learners, to develop new curriculum and services that address the academic and language gaps of this group, and to rectify the conditions in schools that contribute towards the creation of long-term English language learners. Since that time, there has been an explosion of new awareness about this group, a growing sense of urgency about addressing their needs, and a move to action.

Drawing upon research of effective English language learner practices, an analysis of the specific needs of L-TELLs, and the challenges and opportunities in the new Common Core standards for Language Arts, it becomes evident that the most effective approaches to meet these students’ needs include a very clear and well-defined set of elements:

- A commitment to rigor, acceleration, and possibility
- A pervasive element of empowering pedagogy that ignites (or re-ignites) a sense of connection to literacy and education, excitement about learning, and a sense of personal relevance connecting students to their learning
- A focus on active engagement to break the cycle of non-participation that is so typical among L-TELLs

- Explicit strategies to build a sense of community and support among students
- Establishment of consistent and appropriately scaffolded academic routines and instructional approaches across the curriculum
- An emphasis on oral language development, and the consistent and frequent use of strategies that engage students in actively producing language
- Routine use of high-level texts and academic discourse, which include rigorous academic language and academic vocabulary
- The inclusion of multiple genres of reading and writing—expository, literary, journalistic, etc.
- A focus on how English works in academic contexts and for academic purposes
- A focus on goal setting, mentoring, advising in order to help students clarify their dreams and identify pathways to achieving them
- A focus on study skills

Given the magnitude of the long-term English language learner challenge and the need for curriculum resources, it was both wonderful and not surprising that AVID would step up to develop a new program to address this need, for despite the academic struggles that plague long-term English language learners, the vast majority have high hopes of going to college but lack the pathway or support structures that will make this possible. AVID’s history of highly successful college readiness programs that accelerate student learning positioned it well to take on addressing the needs of the middle school English language learners who either were or were becoming L-TELLs.

While other curriculum developers were approaching middle school long-term English language learners primarily through a lens of intervention, AVID’s approach was to create AVID Excel, an accelerated pathway into high school AVID and on to college preparation—replete with cohort support, family engagement, an assets-oriented focus on biliteracy, and careful construction of a rigorous and scaffolded curriculum. The AVID Excel curriculum reflects a deep understanding of the full and complex range of L-TELL needs. It is a comprehensive approach that is age appropriate and gives its students the tools and support to take control of their schooling and plan their pathway to college and careers.

It is now almost a third of a century since civil rights legislation and federal court decisions sought to end a long history of exclusion from education for language and cultural minority groups in the United States. The landmark Supreme Court ruling (*Lau v. Nichols*) made clear that “students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education” and our system of education must “be designed to meet [these students] language needs as soon as possible” so as to not pose an “educational dead-end or permanent track.” Long-term English language learners are in grave danger of being at exactly that point. AVID Excel interrupts that trajectory, offering students an educational lifeline and a means to fulfill their dreams of achieving English proficiency and preparing for college.

Laurie Olsen, Ph.D.

Researcher and author of *Reparable Harm*

AVID Excel Core Content

AVID Excel courses that students experience during the Summer Bridges and during the AVID Excel Electives focus on six consistent learning strands—reading, writing, oral language, academic vocabulary, study skills, and self-determination and leadership—that help to accelerate language acquisition, increase overall achievement, and give students access to rigorous coursework.

Students start AVID Excel courses in the summer between 6th and 7th grade with a two-week Summer Bridge, which focuses on building a sense of family among the students, and on helping them shape their 7th grade academic personas and take control of their learning and language building. They then continue as a cohort with the 7th grade Elective class, where they participate in intensive academic language building during the entire school year. Another two-week Summer Bridge occurs between 7th and 8th grades, the focus of which is language building and leadership skills. This is followed by an 8th grade Elective. Whenever possible, districts are encouraged to include a week-long Summer Bridge leading into high school, partnering with the 9th grade AVID teachers and students.

Each AVID Excel course builds upon the previous courses, introducing new skills in each of the six learning strands while enhancing the skills the students have begun to develop. As you review the core content covered through AVID Excel curriculum, consider which strategies, structures, and tools best support the learning and skills listed. Revisit this list often as your experience with AVID Excel expands, and add to your notes.

AVID Excel Summer Bridge

(2 weeks each session)

	6th into 7th Grade Transition to Middle School	7th into 8th Grade Leadership in Middle School
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7th grade textbook preview (ELA, science, social science) • Introduction to reading routines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main Idea/Details – Cornell Notes - “Movie” (Narrative Text) • Introduction to the Critical Reading Process and marking the text • Exploration of a hot topic: peer pressure article • Summer reading with reading log • Promotion of ongoing independent reading: 7th grade goal is 25 books or more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8th grade textbook preview (ELA, science, social science) • Exploration of a hot topic: “Acting White” article/study and interpretation of statistics • Summer reading with book talks and Socratic Seminar • Promotion of ongoing independent reading: 8th grade goal: 30 books or more
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornell notes • Quickwrites • Learning logs (metacognition) • Academic summaries • Sentence frames and graphic organizers: sequencing, compare/contrast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornell notes • Learning logs (metacognition) • Speech writing • Writing prompt dissection • Essay writing: leadership prompt • Writing process • Elaboration language frames • Writing focus lessons: 7th grade lessons, introductions, thesis statements, and conclusions
Oral Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner interviews & speeches (diagnostic) • Role plays and language coaching to support speaking with confidence • Language registers and academic scripts • Introduction to Socratic Seminar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book talks • Speech delivery • Socratic Seminar and academic scripts • Philosophical Chairs

	6th into 7th Grade Transition to Middle School	7th into 8th Grade Leadership in Middle School
Academic Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of the English language • Introduction to word analysis/word parts • Academic Word List (AWL): Costa’s Levels of Thinking • Idioms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word analysis/word parts • Idioms • Word relationship chart
Study Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornell notes and learning logs • Binder and organization • Successful class interactions: SLANT • Costa’s Levels of Thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornell notes with peer evaluation and revision
Self-Determination/ Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teambuilding • Campus tour and syllabi analysis • Basic “I” Messages • Personal responsibility • Impressions/assumptions/expectations of peers • Positive self-image and peer relationships • 7th grade expectations and middle school campus tour • Goal-setting for 7th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teambuilding • Learning styles survey and profile (taking control) • Introduction to leadership traits and personal leadership profile • Campus walk—analyzing leadership pockets • Syllabi analysis • Stereotypes and leadership role plays • Transcript review and GPA calculation • Value of high school and college educations • Postsecondary options research • College letters • Six-year plan • Introduction to conflict management • SMARTER goals for 8th grade
Community Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies, depending on available community resources • Goal: students experience activities that build their academic language and background knowledge, expose them to community resources and opportunities, and motivate them toward higher education. 	

8th into 9th Grade - Optional District-Designed Summer Bridge into High School AVID:

Optional; developed independently by AVID Excel sites and AVID Secondary sites within a feeder pattern.

AVID Excel Elective

(Full School Year)

	7th Grade Elective	8th Grade Elective
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside reading with reading logs • Review of 7th grade core content texts • Reading routines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Movie” (Narrative Text) - Main Idea/Details – Cornell Notes • Graphic organizers and summary templates • Scholar Group collaboration focused on student questions on various texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside reading with reading logs • Review of 8th grade core content texts • Reading routines, as appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Movie” (Narrative Text) - Main Idea/Details – Cornell Notes - Key Word Outline - Socratic Seminar (Close Reading) • Graphic organizers and summary templates
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic summaries • Note-taking and learning logs • Career research paper and presentation • Regular short writing tasks practicing extending sentences and applying focus lessons • Sentence frames (with decreased scaffolding) • “Style” focus lessons to enhance writing; includes lessons such as using quality adjectives, strong verbs, clauses, various sentence openers • “Bugs” focus lessons for more accurate writing; lessons determined through diagnostic assessment • Prompt dissection • Timed writing • Multi-paragraph graphic organizers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic summaries • Extended persuasive writing: College and Career Debate research process and paper • Regular short writing tasks practicing extending sentences and applying focus lessons • Sentence frames (with increased complexity) • “Style” focus lessons: Review/practice all of 7th grade • “Style” focus lessons such as: dual adjectives and adverbs, new clauses, sentence combining, transitions, introductions, conclusions • “Bugs” focus lessons for more accurate writing; lessons determined through diagnostic assessment • Prompt dissection

	7th Grade Elective	8th Grade Elective
Oral Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking with confidence • Language registers and academic scripts • Spoken exchanges with increasing levels of complexity and elaboration • Asking clarifying questions • Active listening and “I” messages • Formal presentations: short speeches with feedback; career research presentation • Philosophical Chairs and Socratic Seminar • “Hot Topics” discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued practice with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speaking with confidence - Language registers and academic scripts - Spoken exchanges with increasing levels of complexity and elaboration - Asking clarifying questions - Active listening and “I” messages practice • Self-advocacy across content areas • Formal presentations: short speeches with feedback; College and Career Debate • Philosophical Chairs and Socratic Seminar • “Hot Topics” discussions
Academic Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word analysis/word parts • Target word parts: duo, unus, bi, tres, tri, sex, octo, centum, decem, mille, extra, bene, mal, inter, trans, dia, ad, cum, pro, ars/artis, manus, photos, syn, thesis, geo, luna, sol, dico/dictum, scribe/scriptum, mater/matrix, pater/patris, biblos, pathos • Word relationship chart • Academic Word List (AWL) • Idioms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word analysis/word parts • Target word parts: heteros, homos, circum, peri, ambi, amphi, omnis, hyper, hypo, super, sub, dokein, specto/spectatum, mare, sal/salis, naus, navis, cutis, derma, cor/cordis, dorsum, laboro/laboratum, durus, gradus, solus, monos, orthos • Word relationship chart (including leadership skills trait words) • Academic Word List (AWL) • Idioms
Study Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note-taking and learning logs • CORNELL WAY focus lessons • Inquiry practice • Binder and organization • Assignment analysis • SLANT • Time management • Scholar Group process and resources • Test-taking • Test preparation • Costa’s Levels of Thinking • Mnemonics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note-taking and learning logs • CORNELL WAY focus lessons • Inquiry practice • Binder and organization • Assignment analysis • Successful class interactions • Time management: backwards planning for long-term projects; confronting procrastination • Tutorial process and resources • Test-taking • Test preparation • Costa’s Levels of Thinking • Mnemonics

	7th Grade Elective	8th Grade Elective
Self-Determination/ Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I” messages • Leadership/followership skills (including affiliations with student leadership groups on campus) • Personal responsibility • Goal-setting: Academic Action Plans • The High Price of Missing Assignments • GPA calculation • Reflection and metacognition, including learning logs • “Hot Topics” discussions • Teambuilding • Awareness of social justice and equity issues • Development of positive self-image and peer relationships • Guest speakers • Taking responsibility vs. being a victim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership traits study: courage, integrity, perseverance, responsibility, empathy, teamwork, fairness, commitment, initiative • Personal responsibility • SMARTER goal-setting: long-term and short-term; Academic Action Plans • Reflection and metacognition, including learning logs • “Hot Topics” discussions • Six-year plan • College banner project and College current events • Teambuilding • Awareness of social justice and equity issues • Development of positive self-image and peer relationships • Guest speakers • Understanding and transitioning to high school

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Online Resources

The following resources to support this section can be found online in MyAVID.
(MyAVID File Sharing » AVID Excel » AVID Excel Teacher Resources)

- Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners
- Diagnostic Checklist
- National Standards for English Language Development: TESOL

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Online Resources

The following resources to support this section can be found online in MyAVID.
(MyAVID File Sharing » AVID Excel » AVID Excel Teacher Resources)

- Evaluating a Socratic Seminar as a Whole
- Master List of Focus Lessons: Student Record
- The Power of Reading (PowerPoint® presentation)

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Online Resources

The following resources to support this section can be found online in MyAVID.
(MyAVID File Sharing » AVID Excel » AVID Excel Teacher Resources)

- 7th Grade: Applying Style Elements
- 8th Grade: Applying Style Elements
- AVID Excel Career Research Project Research and Presentation (PowerPoint® presentation)
- Career Interest Survey
- Conclusions: Using Strong Statements
- Diagnostic Checklist
- Master List of Focus Lessons: Student Record
- Master List of Focus Lessons: Teacher Record
- Multi-Paragraph Graphic Organizer
- Pre-Writing Cluster for Three-Point Paragraph
- Responding to Writing as a Reader, Not a Critic
- Techniques for Writing Persuasively
- Three-Point Paragraph Planner
- Three-Point Paragraph: Student Sample
- Writing the Conclusion
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Online Resources

The following resources to support this section can be found online in MyAVID.
(MyAVID File Sharing » AVID Excel » AVID Excel Teacher Resources)

- 7th Grade: Applying Style Elements
- Diagnostic Checklist
- Elements of Socratic Seminar
- How Do I Create a Hook?
- Master List of Focus Lessons: Student Record
- Multi-Paragraph Essay Resources
- Public Speaking Sentence Frames
- Socratic Seminar Sample Class Arrangements

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Online Resources

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(MyAVID File Sharing » AVID Excel » AVID Excel Teacher Resources)

- History of English (PowerPoint® presentation)

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Online Resources

The following resources to support this section can be found online in MyAVID.
(MyAVID File Sharing » AVID Excel » AVID Excel Teacher Resources)

- Cornell Notes Bookmarks (Student Handout)
- Cornell Note Paper
- Model Cornell Notes
- Scholar Group Video

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Online Resources

The following resources to support this section can be found online in MyAVID.
(MyAVID File Sharing » AVID Excel » AVID Excel Teacher Resources)

- College Banner (Student Handout)
- Guest Speaker Contact Information Form
- Guest Speak Sample Introduction Letter
- Guest Speaker Guide
- Master List of Focus Lessons: Student Record
- The Power of Perception (PowerPoint® presentation)

AVID Excel

Digital Planning Guides

AVID Excel 7th Grade Elective

The Digital Planning Guides can be used to plan instruction for each unit of AVID Excel and have replaced the use of the spiral planning guides. The unit lessons are listed below in a suggested sequential order; however, the teacher can determine the order and the time spent on each routine/topic based on the needs of the students in the class. Please note the list of Recursive Routines at the bottom of the outline provides support in content taught in previous units that may need to be revisited in this unit. A day-by-day planning calendar is not included in the Digital Planning Guides to offer more flexibility and encourage intentionality when planning lessons based on diagnostic data collected about the students. All lessons and routines are hyperlinked directly to their location in the AVID Excel curriculum.

Unit 1: Getting Organized and Impressing our Teachers

Unit Objectives:

Students will:

- Use focused notes, binders, planners, and time management to demonstrate organization.
- Use precise language in communication to impress teachers
- Prepare for Scholar Groups by understanding their purpose and practicing reading strategies.
- Analyze “The Road Not Taken” and reflect upon own road to success.
- Analyze goals and time management practices to make decisions that enable academic success.
- Practice strategies to meet teachers’ expectations.
- Use strategies that retain learning.

Essential Questions:

- What strategies can I use to get organized?
- What strategies can I use to understand teachers’ expectations
- What strategies can I use to retain my learning?
- How do I show my teachers that I’m serious, empowered, and engaged?

Responsible Communication Trait:

- Active Listening

Unit 1: Key Lessons, Routines, and Instructional Practices

1. Unit 1 Launch Lesson
2. First Week: High Price of Missing Assignments
3. Bell Work Routines: Quote Analysis & AWL
4. Academic Word List (AWL) Routine
5. Critical Reading Routine
6. Scholar Group Routine Introduction
7. Scholar Groups Lesson Series
8. Responsible Communication Traits: Active Listening
9. “The Road Not Taken”
10. Writing Style Focus Lesson: Adjectives and Adverbs
11. Time Management
12. End of Unit 1: World Café
13. **Recursive Routines**

2. Reveal step 1 of the bell work.
 - a. Model reading the quote with enunciation and clarity.
 - b. Have participants move through step 1 on slide.
3. Reveal step 2 of bell work.
 - a. Pose question to room, using the verbal/physical cue for thinking. Allow 5–7 seconds of silent think time.
 - b. Have scholars take their academic language scripts out and have them use a sticky note to mark the “Building on What Others Say” and “Expressing an Opinion” scripts.
 - c. Prompt scholars to work with their A/B partner and respond using the frame on the slide. They will have this back-and-forth conversation about each word.
4. Reveal step 3 of bell work, which moves to writing
 - a. Read step 3 aloud, using verbal and physical cues for thinking. Allow scholars 7–10 seconds to think.
 - b. Scholars will have 3 minutes to write. Challenge participants to use at least one word from the word bank provided and mention that they can change the form of the word (e.g., “leadership” could become “leader”).
 - c. Working with their A/B partner, scholars have 5 minutes to share and practice rehearsal/revision. They will need to place their papers side by side. It is important to call out expectations of the active listener and speaker.
 - d. Ask for “academic risk takers” in the room to stand and deliver, celebrate with snap/claps.

Opportunities for Language Coaching

As a language coach, did I:

- ✓ Use verbal and physical cues for complete sentences and elaboration?
- ✓ Engage with students’ partner conversations to check for bugs? Use “**hummingbird**” **facilitation** mode while students worked to diagnose and coach language? Pay close attention to scholars and bugs they might be?