



3 Ways to Support Language-Diverse Science Classrooms

Strategies for everyone | **Designed for MLLs** | No prep or budget required!



Sketch it and hold it up!

1 Make multimodal communication the norm

- **Equip** every student with a mini whiteboard or sheet protector — sketches show thinking!
- **Designate** a set of lesson materials for students to hold up and point to when sharing ideas.
- **Model** communication styles by facing the speaker and asking questions about what you see. Gestures and visuals count!

TRY THIS → Ask, "Can you show us your thinking?"



Spot the key words.

2 Preview the language in the activity

- **Spotlight** key terms and phrases that signal science practices or ideas to use.
- **Annotate** science sentence patterns, such as: cause → effect, system → parts.
- **Generate** gestures and sketches together as the class reads the materials.

PSST... ⚠ Support the language but don't give away the discovery!



"Is that what you meant?"

3 Elevate the language students bring

- **Invite** students to re-voice and re-gesture each other's ideas.
- **Chart** the words, sketches, and gestures the class uses to explain one idea.
- **Grow** the Word Wall from students' own language.

TRY THIS → Add one student-contributed phrase to the Word Wall.

Start small. Build a habit.

Pick one strategy and build it into a single lesson this week. Then do it again next week. Small moves become classroom habits, and habits are how classroom culture changes.

Notice who participates that didn't before!

Want a thought partner?

Ask about our coaching services for language-rich science classrooms.



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