

WHAT CAN I DO?

What Can I Do to Learn About the LEP Student's Culture?

Ask the student about his country and enthusiastically assign the country to your class as a social studies project. Engage the entire school in international education. The more you and your class ask and learn from the LEP student, the sooner her or she will feel confident and comfortable.

***Note:** Be aware, however, of the potential effects of singling a student out as "different." Monitor this student's reactions closely and drop or modify the activity if the student is uncomfortable.

Go to the library; read National Geographic; invite foreign speakers to your school such as families, religious leaders, merchants, visiting professionals. Keep current on movies, traveling exhibits, local festivals. Listen to the news and discuss pertinent issues with the class.

Find out which holidays the LEP student celebrates and how they are celebrated. Find out whether the LEP student's customs are similar to American customs. On United Nations Day or during Brotherhood Week, have the students make flags and food from different countries. Perhaps the LEP student has clothes, money, photos, art work, songs, games, maps, an alphabet or number charts to share with other students. All are valid educational media. Invite foreign parents to teach their native languages in your class for an exciting project. Celebrate "Christ-

***Note:** Again, if all students share their cultural products, one student will not be singled out.

mas Around the World."

What Specific Activities Can I Do to Prepare the LEP Student for Life in the United States?

Explain, demonstrate and anticipate possible difficulties with everyday routines and regulations whenever time permits. If there is a large LEP population in your school or district, perhaps volunteers could compile pictorial or bilingual guidelines or handbooks with details of policy and procedures. Depending upon the student's experience(s) with formal education, the need for explanations may vary greatly. Consider the following routines as "teaching opportunities" to prepare the students for American culture:

IN CLASS

- school conduct
- Morning rituals (greetings, calendar work, assignments, collection of money, homework)
- Library conduct (checkout, book return)
- Field trips/permission slips
- Gym (participation, showers, attire)
- School photographs (dress, payment)
- Substitutes
- Seat work/group work
- Tests, quizzes, reports
- Grades, report cards, incomplete
- "Treats"
- Free time
- Teams (choosing, assigning)
- Standardized testing (exemptions)
- Special projects (extra credit, double grades)
- Emergency drills



IN SCHOOL

- Breaks: bathroom, water, recess
- Cafeteria routines: line formation, lunch passes
- Assemblies/pep rallies/awards ceremonies
- Contests/competitions
- Holidays/festivities/traditions
- Fund raisers/"drives"
- Routine health exams, screening
- Suspension
- Guidance counseling
- Disciplinary methods (in-school suspension)
- Free lunch (income verification)
- "Family life" education (sex education)

AFTER SCHOOL

- Parent conferences and attendance
- PTA meetings
- Proms, dances, special events
- Field days
- Clubs, honor societies, sport activities
- Detention
- Summer school

Source:

Riddlemoser, N. (1987). Working with limited-English-proficient students in the regular classroom. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics.

*Notes added by MRC.

