

Unpacking a Sentence in Designated ELD

Part One: Preparing to Unpack

1. Start with a text you are already using.
2. Choose a juicy sentence.
3. Decide on your focus
 - meaning (vocabulary, phrases, etc)
 - form (grammatical structures, rules)
4. Write down the key points of what you will address and prepare the necessary materials to highlight these points.
5. Plan opportunities for students to talk about and practice what they are learning.

Part Two: Unpacking the Sentence

6. Share the learning target with the students.
7. Explain what “unpacking a sentence” means and why it is done.
8. Read the juicy sentence together.
9. Do a think-aloud that demonstrates how to break down the sentence into everyday language.
 - *Students stop and talk about your thinking.
10. Talk about your focus (meaning and/or form).
 - *Students stop and talk about the focus.
11. Students apply and practice what they have learned in this unpacking.
12. If applicable, revisit sentence with a different focus.

Tips for Unpacking a Sentence

- This is challenging work. Collaborate with colleagues to choose juicy sentences and plan for the unpacking.
- Use sentence unpacking strategically.
- Be mindful of how much you are talking. Choose what to say wisely.
- Provide ample time for kids to talk about, practice, and apply what you are focusing on.
- Use sentence strips or color coding to support what you are saying. Unpacking a sentence should not be entirely oral.
- Keep it simple. Focus on one or two concepts and revisit the sentence for different purposes.

Resource

- Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary
www.learnersdictionary.com