ESL Guide
for the
College Writing Center

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The Purpose of This Guide

Tutoring is a dynamic process. Each student walking through the College Writing Center door has specific strengths and weaknesses. This guide does not represent a comprehensive or complete solution to the expressive needs of all ESL students; however, we feel that after reviewing the various sections, you will feel more prepared and more able to help ESL students express their ideas and clarify their thoughts. We recommend that you explore this guide as a basic introduction that you can then use as a foundation for further personal and academic advancement.

A Brief Introduction to ESL

This section of the guide is intended to give you a brief introduction to the basics of ESL: what it is, who these students are, and what basic language problems tend to be difficult for them.

What Is ESL?

Students who are categorized as learners of English as a Second Language (ESL) come from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. A basic definition would be any person who is learning English in an English speaking country. For example, Korean students who are not native English speakers but are studying education at SUNY Potsdam would normally be classified as ESL students. ESL students, just as all students, require an assessment of language skills and abilities before an action plan of best practices can be implemented. As a tutor, you won't be developing a large curriculum for each student, but you should be evaluating the students' progress as you go through the session and working to make sure the student understands you. We'll give you more guidance on this later. SUNY Potsdam hosts many students with a range of English abilities; many of them will require assistance from the College Writing Center Team (CWC).

ESL is not limited to foreign students. It is not uncommon for American students to have language difficulties if their parents do not speak English. If students spend their time outside of school conversing in their families' native tongue, they often struggle with written and spoken English fluency. These students would be considered ESL according to our definition. It is important to remember that ESL is a label, and just as any label, it can become problematic.

ESL is a difficult label because many students from different backgrounds are included. We've given examples of students who are coming from a different country, so English is a foreign language to them. Students in the US who have moved here as a child or adult are also included in this category because they most likely learned English once they arrived. Students born in the US, as we've explained above, but who speak their parents' native language at home, might also be considered ESL because they don't speak English as their first or primary language. Many students learn English in their native country, from a non-native English speaker, and have a great deal of difficulty because they aren't truly fluent when speaking with a native English speaker. Many students already speak two or three or four languages, so English is not their "second" language. Confused? It's okay. We're just pointing out that many different students fall into the ESL category, but it's important to remember that they are truly different and don't "fit" a generic label.

Later, we'll discuss the benefits and dangers of making assumptions about ESL students. The important thing is, despite the differences in how and why students are learning English, there are many best practices we can use to facilitate written expression. At the heart of this guide is an attempt to introduce

and explore some of those avenues which will provide you with a variety of tools for your tutoring toolbox.

What Parts of English Do ESL Students Struggle with?

Now that we have briefly defined ESL, let's look at a few areas in language acquisition that are particularly troublesome for an ESL student. In this section, we will mostly outline some big picture issues and later, we'll discuss strategies. We have focused on four primary categories: colloquial speech, idiomatic expressions, phrasal verbs, and proposition & article usage. Part of the problem with these sections of speech is that they overlap. Idioms, phrasal verbs, and colloquial speech very frequently fit into two or three categories. Hopefully, we can outline them enough so that you will have a brief understanding from which to build on through your own learning. At the end of this guide, we've included a web resource section. Many of these websites give you, as a tutor, information to learn and practice these parts of speech.

Colloquial Speech – The easiest way to describe colloquial speech would be to say that it is informal language that is used in everyday conversations. Generally speaking, colloquial language should be avoided in formal, academic writing. Phrases such as "What's Up?", "How's it going?", "That test was insane!", and "That's cool!" are examples of colloquial speech. These kinds of expressions are difficult for ESL students because they are context specific and cannot be literally translated word-for-word. Colloquial speech will both frustrate and fascinate ESL students because incorporating colloquialisms into speech is a marker of linguistic fluency. We would encourage you to include the expressions that come naturally to you during a tutoring session, but make a point to ask your tutee to stop you if he or she needs an explanation. Very often, colloquial speech will go right over a student's head, so it's important to check for understanding.

Applied Practice: Take a minute and think of some other colloquialisms in our language. How would you explain them to an ESL student?

Idiomatic Expressions – All words have a dictionary definition; however, the English language is full of expressions that cannot be looked up, word by word, in the dictionary. There are, of course, dictionaries just for idioms and phrasal verbs, but the point is that you can't explain their meaning based solely on the meaning of independent words. For example:

I've been *burning the candle at both ends* while studying for finals.
That test was a *piece of cake*.
It's *raining cats and dogs*.
Stop *pulling my leg*.

Of course, there are thousands of other idiomatic expressions, but you can see why they could be problematic for a non-native speaker. It is nearly impossible to understand these idioms without some explanation or additional context. In the CWC you will have both native and non-native English speakers who incorporate idioms into academic writing. Most idioms, like colloquial speech, should be avoided in formal, academic prose. That being said, idioms are endless fun, and do not be discouraged from explaining or incorporating them in your discourse with the tutee. Understanding how your language functions will better enable you to express yourself in the verbal and written form!

Phrasal Verbs – Phrasal verbs are replete in English and are created with a preposition and an adverb or verb. Like idioms, phrasal verbs cannot usually be understood by the dictionary definition of each word. Some examples of phrasal verbs follow:

Pick Up
Switch off
Dive into
Finish off
Knock off

The difficulty in understanding phrasal verbs is that many phrasal verbs take multiple meanings in different contexts. Let's look at the phrasal verb *knock off*.

Let's knock off early. (Go home)
Hey, you kids knock it off! (Stop it)
I'll knock 50 dollars off the price. (Reduce)
I knocked him off his chair! (Made him fall)

ESL students struggle with usage and appropriateness when applying phrasal verbs to their writing. Some phrasal verbs are acceptable in academic discourse and others are not. We would encourage you to listen closely and take opportunities to identify and explain phrasal verbs to your tutees. Better yet, try to elicit the meaning from them! This will give them the chance to make meaning from their own background knowledge before being given the answer.

Prepositional Phrases and Articles – Ok, so we combined these categories in order to sneak in articles. These are two of the more frequent areas of concern in ESL writing. Most languages (but not all) have prepositions, but are often used differently. ESL students will wonder why we say *in* the car but *on* the bus. What is the difference between *at* my house and *in* my house? We encourage you to think about how you use prepositions in writing and speaking, then practice explaining your justifications to a friend. It will hone your skills and make you a more proficient user of language.

Articles are always problematic for ESL students. The general rule for the difference between *a* and *the* is dependent on specificity. For example:

John, please bring me a pencil.

In this sentence, the pencil brought is up to John. It can be any pencil at all. The article is being used to indicate a general pencil.

John, please bring me the pencil.

In this sentence, there is only one pencil, and the assumption is that both John and the speaker know which pencil is being referred to.

With article and preposition errors, we find it helpful to point to a sentence and tell the student there is something awkward or missing. Provided the opportunity, many tutees will surprise you with their keen

ability to identify errors and self-correct! To learn more about articles and prepositions, check out the "Resources and KYOL" section near the end of this guide.

Dangers and Benefits of Assumptions

Assumptions are part of human nature. Whether walking into a classroom, shopping at the grocery store, or sitting down to begin a session, we all make assumptions about ourselves and those around us. Assumptions about tutees are made from a variety of factors: personal appearance, phenotype, race, class, gender, etc. Perhaps the client is disheveled, tired looking, or distraught; the client may appear to be an ESL student because they "look" foreign in some way. You might also have assumptions about how a tutee will react or respond to your comments. These types of assumptions are important to be aware of because they will affect the session in some way. We would encourage you to identify and understand the assumptions you make about a tutee, as well as the benefits and detriments that are manifest from those assumptions.

Applied Practice: The following are brief examples of common assumptions about ESL students.

Situation #1: A student or Asian comes to your session. When you ask where he's from, he tells you that he grew up and went to school in Boston, but he is difficult to understand and his paper is disorganized with incorrect grammar and lots of spelling mistakes.

Discussion: What are your assumptions about this student? Do you believe that he grew up in the US? Do you assume his difficulty communicating is a lack of school support or education? Are you subconsciously associating low language level with a lack of intelligence? Consider how different family situations, inner-city schools systems, and socioeconomic status can affect grammar development when you speak a "native" language at home and a "foreign" language at school.

Situation #2: At the end of your session, you tell the student you're working with that the paper is great, they just need to proof-read now that they have finished all the high-order concerns that you have spent the session working on. You don't go into detail and the student doesn't seem confused, but is happy that the paper is finished.

Discussion: How does your assumption that the student knows what "proof-reading" is affect the end of your meeting? When you assume that a student understands your references in general, how does this affect the quality of the session?

It is important to be aware of the assumptions you're making. We all make assumptions as we're going through our day, but it's important to allow ourselves to make clear judgments about each student and each student's needs on an individual basis. Take a few minutes to talk to your tutee before you start your session. Discuss their concerns and the problems they feel need addressing. Keep in mind that every ESL student is different and has had a different learning styles, experiences, and needs.

The Role of the CWC

The CWC is an important space for both tutors and tutees. Take a few minutes to consider the importance of what you as a group of tutors are doing. Why are you a tutor? What role does the CWC play in the overall running of the College? How do you see yourself as a part of this group and how does that affect your ability to help your peers?

CWC as A Social Space

The CWC has a reputation for being a place where people can bring their ideas, frustrations, writing, or just about anything to share with their tutor. The process of writing is by nature a social activity as people commonly bounce ideas of one another, proofread, edit, and make suggestions. This happens in a condensed version in the CWC, which creates a social atmosphere of productivity and safety ESL students may gravitate towards.

Tutor Attitudes

Tutoring an ESL student may take you out of your comfort zone as a tutor. Take this as a learning experience and an opportunity for self-discovery to stretch your understandings of cultural and linguistic perspectives, techniques, and tutor methods. The CWC is full of surprises, and ESL students provide a wonderful opportunity to think about how we use language. Some questions I have considered include: why do native speakers use a particular word/phrase/syntax/idiom? What does that piece of language represent about culture, and how can its use be explained to a non-native speaker? Through your interactions with ESL students, you will begin to think about language in a different way. Some questions cannot be answered with a logical linguistic explanation, but that is part of the fun. Why do native say I went swimming *in the* Saint Lawrence River, but I went swimming *on* Lake Erie? Why don't we say swimming *on the* Lake Erie? The absence of an article is a bit of arbitrary language that is difficult to explain. In these instances, we have had much success by pointing out to the tutee that languages are imperfect, and as such contain a number of inconsistencies. English, being one of the more difficult languages to learn, has more inconsistencies than most, and requires patience and perseverance to master.

As Westerners, we are exposed to concepts and ideological roadmaps for writing that are not standard in many other areas of the world. As Americans, we have social dynamics and expectations that many other people may find strange, offensive, or funny. ESL students are at a disadvantage when entering into a social space, like the CWC, and asking for help; this places the tutee in a vulnerable position. It is also easy as a tutor to become frustrated with the pace of an ESL session, rate of comprehension, or focus on grammar and mechanics. Be aware of the fact that ESL students are professional language learners and will pick up on body language cues, frustration, and exasperation on the part of the tutor.

We share this information not to dissuade or provoke native speakers, but rather to raise awareness of the discrepancies in expectations regarding native and non-native speakers. It is our opinion that the university invites non-native speaking students to attend, and it becomes the responsibility of faculty, administration, and the student body to be aware of the culture and needs of those students. We encourage you to get to know all of your tutees, but remember to be aware that international students have left their family, homes, friends, and culture behind in an effort to master a difficult language and experience a drastically different culture. As an ESL tutor at the CWC, you are in the special position of acting as a cultural liaison. International students will make judgments and take impressions of the United States as a whole based on their interactions with you, the school, and North Country residents

in general. Although in a small way, your helpfulness, patience, and attitude will affect the general perception of America. Through the writing process, you will learn more about yourself and with an open mind, you will learn quite a bit about different cultures, ideas, writing styles, and ideologies.

Dangers of Sarcasm and Peer Humor

When you're working with an American student, you usually have similar speaking styles. You might use sarcastic humor to discuss the classroom or certain professors that you have trouble learning from or you might joke about a pop culture reference or a baseball rivalry. But when you're working with an ESL student, sarcasm might not convey your intended meaning or may come across as seriously disrespectful to the student. Although peer humor is fairly common, it's probably best to avoid sarcasm in many tutoring situations anyway. Many times, especially in group sessions, this can isolate your ESL tutee. If several people in the group are joking about a topic that is culture specific, chances are that the international student will be left out.

Student Struggles (Cultural, Social, Psychological)

Every student struggles when they arrive at college. You went through it when you arrived – you had to make new friends, learn your way around the campus and town, and learn to negotiate your way between school, work, and a new, independent social life. ESL students are no different: ESL students who grew up in America, but with a different home language now have to navigate their entire life in English. ESL students from other countries are facing the challenge of using English outside the classroom in a foreign culture. It's important to remember that these students are struggling with all of the common problems you struggled with, but with the added cultural and linguistic difficulties.

Limited Campus Support

Unfortunately, ESL students have limited avenues to explore in terms of educational and emotional support. Although only a small percentage of the college population, ESL students utilize nearly 40% of the CWC resources. This is more striking when considering that the K.I. program (our primary block of ESL students) is comprised of only 20-25 students. These students depend on the CWC for a variety of needs, and while we can't fulfill all of the emotional, social, intellectual, and cultural needs of these students, it is important for the team to have a unified and consistent message regarding our own capabilities. Be empathetic, use discretion, and know your personal and professional limitations.

Geographical, Social , and Emotional Isolation

Remember being homesick your first term on campus? Most people do. It is difficult to leave everything you know and are comfortable with and become acclimated to a new academic and social milieu. As we mentioned before, many ESL students have left families behind in an effort to have a better life through studying in the United States. It is easy to assume that all of the ESL students hang out and support one another, but this can be a faulty assumption.

Many ESL students have come from thriving cities where busses, subways, and taxis are an integrated part of life. They are now living in Potsdam, NY where there is one main street, virtually non-existent public transportation, and a mostly homogeneous culture. This assimilation process certainly affects the writing process. When students sit down for a session, these frustrations may be manifest in understanding an explanation, exploring an idea, or communicating authorial intent.

Expanded Course Loads

Most ESL students are ambitious. This is most likely their only opportunity to experience the American educational system, and the K.I. students in particular are taking upwards of 18 graduate credits. Keep in mind that this is also many students' first opportunity to listen to a native speaking professor discussing graduate level concepts. Many students are going to have difficulty understanding content, assignment descriptions, and course expectations. This is one of the reasons why we ask students to bring their assignment descriptions with them to a session. Our experience is that taking five minutes at the beginning of a session to clarify the professor's expectations saves a great deal of time in the long run.

Learned vs. Expected Writing Styles

All students experience a shock when they enter college. Suddenly, complicated mechanics, such as citation, are considered tacit knowledge every student should possess. Furthermore, students need to utilize an academic discourse that is consistent with their department. Writing an essay for an English class requires a different specialized vocabulary from writing an essay for a biology class. In college, the nature of rhetoric and argumentation is elevated to a semi-professional level when most students' largest foray into research and essays was their senior paper in high school.

ESL students come from cultures where argumentation may be defined differently from Western standards. Many college professors (although certainly not all) expect students to write a standard, five paragraph essay, with an introduction, conclusion, beginning thesis statement, supporting ideas, etc., especially as Freshman. This idea of a direct, super structured essay is non-existent is some cultures. Many ESL students come from societies that have different standards regarding the relationship between the author and reader.

For example, while I was discussing the metaphor *Argument is War* with an ESL student, she claimed that, in Korean, the metaphor is *Argument is Dance*. This seemingly subtle discrepancy can be useful in explaining the approach that many non-Western students utilize in academic discourse. In Western writing, the author is expected to overtly lay out a claim, support that claim, and analyze evidence from experts. The onus of clarity is on the writer. In Eastern writing, the craft skills of a writer are dependent on an interweaving of traditional axioms, common perceptions, and little to no authorial voice. There is a co-dependent relationship between the reader and writer that is not reflective of common Western writing expectations. ESL students have to navigate these changes and expectations with little if any practice writing with in a Western style. If an ESL student comes to a session with issues of plagiarism or citation it is more often a reflection of the different ideologies regarding academic ownership and writing styles than an attempt to cheat.

Best Practices

As with any student, there is never a "perfect" way to teach, mentor, or tutor. Here are a few tips that generally are very successful with ESL students.

High-Order and Low-Order Concerns

In writing, there are generally two revising issues. The first is high-order concerns. This typically includes the larger idea of the paper, such as the audience, thesis, organization, and larger arguing points. The low-order concerns are generally smaller points, like spelling, grammar, word choice, and mechanics.

Usually, when you meet with a student, as a tutor you should focus on the high-order concerns first and the low-order concerns second.

Often, ESL students will want you to "fix" their grammar first, but this is only the most important step if their paper is completely incomprehensible. Generally, you want to work through the high-order concerns first and look at the paper as a complete whole.

Here are some questions that can help you focus your tutee on high-order concerns:
Did I address and answer the question?
What is the thesis, or main argument in this paper? Is it clear and easily understandable?
What are the major arguments that support this thesis? Can you find and label them within the paper?
Does each of your arguments have support?
Is the paper organized in a logical way?

As you're going through these questions with your tutee, you may have to adjust them based on the type of paper the tutee is writing and the expectations of the professor, but generally these questions can be applied to a research paper as well as a short story or news article.

When taking this approach, you may find yourself in the uncomfortable position of reading a paper without a thesis, arguments, or any organization. It is also possible that a student has written a wonderful paper that does not answer the question. Although it would be easier to go ahead and help the tutee make the paper wonderfully error-free, if the paper hasn't answered the question, it is not valid. If you encounter this type of situation, explain why the paper has missed the mark in a gentle and reassuring way, but firmly discuss what steps you will need to make in order to correct the problem. If the tutee needs to start over or create new arguments, help him or her outline a new paper, new ideas, or new arguments.

In most cases, these papers will only need some general modifications. Once you have made all the high-order concern changes, go back through the paper to discuss grammar, mechanics, and word choice. Ideally, the low-order concerns would be addressed during a separate session, once they have made all the high-order concern choices.

Applied Practice: This is an example of an ESL student sample. Discuss the high-order and low-order concerns you have. Where would you start in a tutoring session with this student? Who do you think the student is writing to (audience, appropriate language, etc.)? How would it help you to have the original prompt for this paragraph? How would you explain some of the conceptual, grammatical, and structural problems with this paragraph?

The article I read discussed about the Labor Day in America. Labor Day is day for celebrating the normal workers in America. Article talked about political system and the troubles with making a job for people. Every people are fuming at there government and one woman in article is a Republican and didn't vote for President Obama, but she wants her party to give him more of a chance. It surprising to see all people angry with their government because America still has many chances for people to make money and happiness. In Korean, we don't have a day called labor day, I would like to see a day like that in my country.

Concept Check Questions

A concept check question (CCQ) is a question that allows you to know if your tutee understands whatever material you are working on. Very often, when you simply ask "do you understand?" or "does this make sense?" to an ESL student, they will respond with an enthusiastic "yes" or vigorous head-nod. Students do this for many different reasons; they may think they understand, but often they are embarrassed, in a hurry to get to more "important" information, or don't want to appear dumb in front of their peers. A CCQ will allow you to tell if they really understand the question.

Basically, a good CCQ will force the student to answer you without using a simple yes or no answer. For example, you and your tutee are discussing the grammar of countable and uncountable nouns. You explain that most nouns are countable and a countable noun is something you can actually count and make plural where as an uncountable noun is usually some type of material, group, concept, or idea that cannot be made plural. Instead of asking, "do you understand?" you might ask the student to make a list of countable and uncountable nouns or choose a few countable and uncountable nouns and ask them to explain to you in their own words which one is which and why. Good examples of brief questions to ask might be, "Why is this an uncountable noun?", "Can you give me an example of another uncountable noun?", "Can you use this noun in a sentence?" All these questions or brief activities allow you to see if the tutee understands the idea. If they don't use the grammar correctly or have trouble explaining it, go back and discuss the idea again.

A CCQ requires you to think a little more about how you construct the questions, but the end result is important. You want the tutee to clearly understand what you're discussing so that they don't repeat the same mistakes. If you explain this concept once while discussing their paper, you shouldn't have to go into it again in great length during the rest of the paper, or the next session. You can just refer them back to the same explanation.

Scaffolding

Scaffolding basically means that you are going to start teaching or explaining certain basic points and then build on those points as your sessions continues or as the year goes on. Scaffolding is best used when you work with the same student every week or several times a week. For example, if you spent part of one session discussing countable and uncountable nouns, you could address this same issue if you had a problem with articles or plural forms the next session. If you were building a student's vocabulary base, each week you could quickly review the vocabulary that you discussed the week before, and address how that vocabulary was used well or if it needs to be revisited in this week's session. The main idea is that you start to build a foundation with a student in some area of difficulty, and you take the time to firmly explore each concept so that the next session you won't have to repeat yourself.

Elicitation

Have you ever played Pictionary, Charades, or Taboo? These games require a player to convey a word or idea without using that word. Players have to elicit information to help them guess the hidden word. This technique is something that works well with all students, but ESL students will benefit particularly well from it.

Why can't I just tell a tutee the word? Well, sometimes it is easier to tell students a word that works best with their ideas, but this will not advance their long-term writing development. ESL students use

context clues to deconstruct difficult sentences and discern meaning (something all good readers do!). Elicitation provides students with a reservoir of vocabulary that is related to the concept you are trying to elicit from them. For example, a student has written the following sentence:

*Koreans are a very **shy** people, politically.*

Shy seems like a misplaced word because Western writers do not use the adjective shy to describe politics. How would you find out more information about the students intent without saying "Do you mean conservative or reserved?" Additionally, how would you elicit those two words from the student without using those words?

Here are a few strategies:
- Ask about the different political parties in Korea. (Perhaps the words conservative, liberal, or progressive may be used.)
- Explain that shy is usually reserved as an adjective for people, not their political tendencies. Then ask some leading questions to get the student thinking about synonyms and antonyms of the word shy.
- Mention that the words you are thinking of have two and four syllables, respectively.
- Use other examples from culture to illustrate the point about language use and appropriateness. Encourage tutees to make connections and self-correct
- Give tutees time to think! 30 seconds seems like a long time, but don't worry; ESL students need that time to process, digest, and reformulate their ideas.

In general, leading questions are a great way to elicit ideas from a student. You could also use realia, draw pictures, or use body language to help elicit ideas from your ESL tutee.

Resources and Know Your Own Language

Although you will always be able to ask your professors, CWC colleagues, or Director for advice on great language resources, here are a few we find particularly useful.

Web Resources

There are many great web resources available to you as a tutor and as a student. If you come to a grammar point you can't explain or need help expanding on a certain style of writing, these can be quick and easy resources that you can send home with your tutees. Here are a couple trusted sites that we love!

The Purdue Online Writing Lab
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/
This is a great, easy to use website for you as a student and as a tutor. On the upper navigation you can choose "ESL" to get easy access to grammar & mechanics, practical exercises for practice, and writing guides for American and international audiences. You also have access to general writing guidelines, multiple research and citation guidelines, and job-specific writing strategies.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: The Writing Center
http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/index.html
This writing center has great information on writing styles, the writing process, and writing for specific purposes. Their "Citations, Style, and Sentence Level Concerns" provides great examples and explanations of common grammar, mechanics, and usage errors.

Dartmouth Writing Program
http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/special/esl.shtml
Dartmouth has a short, but effective presentation of the "American" argument style. Many students from different cultures find American thesis and papers styles are difficult to understand. This website is a good resource for you to understand common problems.

Dave's ESL Cafe
http://www.eslcafe.com/
Dave's ESL Cafe has great resources for tutors and tutees, everything from grammar, phrasal verbs, pronunciation, etc.

Print Resources

At the beginning of the year, the most important resource you can have is a grammar book that you are comfortable using. Look through the resource books in the CWC. Talk to your professors and fellow tutors. Browse the web or the library. However you do it, find one book that you can understand, is accessible, and you can easily navigate. Most students will understand if you can't easily explain a grammar point. But you should be able to quickly find the topic in a book, look at the explanation, and work through the example with your tutee. Being able to navigate the book will allow you quickness and ease when you're in the middle of a session and makes explaining a point much more efficient.

Here are a couple of resources that are available to you in the CWC. Check them out and see if you're comfortable with the style and examples.

Rules of Thumb: A Guide for Writers. Jay Silverman, Elaine Hughes, & Dian Robers Wienbroer

Keys for Writers. Ann Raimes

Careers in ESL

A career in ESL is a great opportunity to work in a truly international field. Opportunities overseas include traveling, exchanging cultural ideas, and exploring linguistic differences. You can work in many positions ranging from university professor or language institute instructor to volunteer positions with global and local charities. In the U.S., you can work with refugees and immigrants to blend cultural ideas and help families adapt and transition into American culture. Interested? There are many organizations to help you get started. TESOL is a great international group, which we belong to, that offers educational ideas, career searches, and professional development around the globe. Check them out at www.tesol.org

Glossary of Terms

Although we used “ESL” to describe language learners in this guide, there are many different terms for non-native speakers who are learning English. Here are a few that you might see:

ESL English as a Second Language
EFL English as a Foreign Language
ELL English Language Learners
TESL Teaching English as a Second Language
TESOL Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages