

Enhancing Interactions with Young Dual Language Learners: **Connecting with Dual Language Learners**

WHAT'S IN THIS PD2GO PACK?

Explore how to connect with children who are learning more than one language. Connecting with dual language learners helps them feel welcome and comfortable in the learning environment. This pack helps teachers and providers interact warmly and responsively with dual language learners and support the use of their home languages.

Your Participants Will...

increase their capacity to build relationships with dual language learners and support children's home-language development.



Enhance verbal communication.



Provide opportunities to use home languages.



Interact warmly and responsively.



SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Facilitator's Guide Everything you need to facilitate this PD2GO presentation on *Connecting with Dual Language Learners*, including an interactive presentation page along with step-by-step presenter's notes.

Coaching Corner One-page resource with self-reflection and practice opportunities that can be explored individually, with peers, and in professional development sessions.


Additional resource materials related to this pack provide opportunities to explore and expand your skills and knowledge through **Digging Deeper**, **Resource Links**, and **Family Connections**.

HOW TO USE THIS FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

This Facilitator's Guide will provide you with step-by-step information on how to present this session using the interactive presentation page and downloadable materials specific to this PD2GO pack. We recommend [opening the pack presentation](#) as you go through this Facilitator's Guide.

Presentation Information

Text written in italics is meant to be spoken out loud during the course of the presentation.

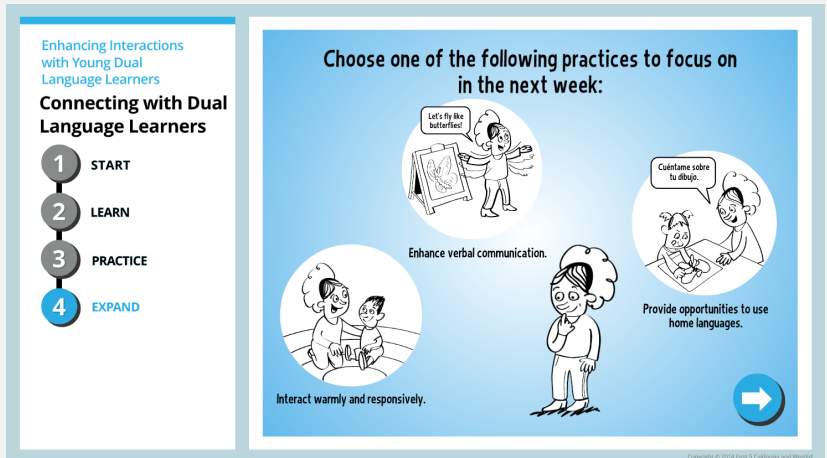
Other text, marked with this icon , offers important information such as instructions or suggested answers to facilitate the presentation of this PD2GO pack.

THE INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION PAGE

The presentation page includes the following elements:

Steps

Click on each number icon to begin the section of the presentation—use the presenter's notes in this guide to facilitate each step of the presentation.



DOWNLOADABLE MATERIALS

In This Pack

Click on the downloadable materials hyperlink to access all materials related to this presentation.

In This Bundle

Click on the downloadable materials hyperlink to access all additional resources and materials that can be used with this presentation and other related packs.

EXPANDING ON THIS PD2GO PACK

This presentation on *Connecting with Dual Language Learners* can be used individually or in conjunction with related packs in the bundle, including *Scaffolding Dual Language Learning* and *Small Groups for Dual Language Learners*. Additional resources and materials in this bundle (*Digging Deeper*, *Resource Links*, and *Family Connections*) are designed to extend skills and knowledge around these related packs, provide links to resources, and promote partnerships with families.

MATERIALS

In this pack, you will find:

[Download all \(3.5 MB\)](#)



[Facilitator's Guide \(3.6 MB\)](#)

Everything you need to facilitate this PD2GO presentation on *Connecting with Dual Language Learners*, including an interactive presentation page along with step-by-step presenter's notes.



[Coaching Corner \(150 KB\)](#)

One-page resource with self-reflection and practice opportunities that can be explored individually, with peers, and in professional development sessions.



[Handout - Connecting with Mei-Mei \(150 KB\)](#)

In this bundle, you will find:

[Download all \(310 KB\)](#)

Additional resource materials related to this pack provide opportunities to explore and expand your skills and knowledge. The resources include:



[Digging Deeper \(230 KB\)](#)



[Family Connections \(270 KB\)](#)




[Resource Links \(230 KB\)](#)



STEP 1:
START

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE

Step 1



Imagine you're in a city where you don't speak the language.

How would you feel if the woman went out of her way to help you even though she didn't speak the same language?




FACILITATOR'S NOTES

[2 min]



Step 1 - Start

Facilitator: *Imagine you're in a city where you don't speak the language.*



Ask participants to close their eyes and visualize themselves in the following story.

Facilitator: *You're having trouble finding a restaurant. You ask a woman sitting on a bench for directions. She stares blankly at you.*

You repeat the restaurant name and point to it on a map. She recognizes the restaurant and smiles. She uses her finger to trace the directions on the map.

She even stands up and walks you down to the corner. She says "there," and she gestures to continue straight and turn right on the next street.



Invite participants to open their eyes.



Facilitator: *How would you feel if the woman went out of her way to help you even though she didn't speak the same language?*



Invite participants to share their ideas. Participants might discuss some of the following feelings:

- Welcome and more comfortable walking around the new city with helpful strangers
- Relieved that the woman found a way to help
- Happy to know how to get to the destination
- Grateful that the woman was willing to help

STEP 1: *Continued*
START

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE

FACILITATOR'S NOTES



Various ways of communicating help us connect with dual language learners.



Go to step 2: LEARN

Facilitator: *When the woman found a way to connect with us even though she didn't speak the same language, we felt relieved and welcome. She communicated with us in a respectful way. She was warm and engaging, and she used nonverbal cues.*



Facilitator: *We use similar ways to connect with children who speak different languages. Various ways of communicating, such as body language, facial expressions, and using some words from their home language, help us connect with dual language learners.*

STEP 2:
LEARN

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE

FACILITATOR'S NOTES

Step 2



Connecting with dual language learners helps them feel welcome in our programs.




[4 min]



Step 2 - Learn

Facilitator: *Connecting with dual language learners helps them feel welcome in our programs.*



STEP 2: LEARN *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE

What are some ways we can connect with dual language learners?



INTERACT WARMLY AND RESPONSIVELY



ENHANCE VERBAL COMMUNICATION



FACILITATOR'S NOTES

Facilitator: *Just like when large ripples form in water from dropping a tiny pebble, our small actions have a big impact on how young dual language learners feel.*

What are some ways we can connect with dual language learners?

CLICK



Facilitator: ***Interact warmly and responsively.*** Warm, responsive interactions, such as making eye contact and smiling, set the foundation for secure relationships and help the child feel comfortable in challenging communication situations.

- *Communicate and interact consistently during routines and transitions to allow dual language learners to easily follow what is going on and know what to expect next.*
- *Observe closely and sensitively respond to what children say and do. When a child gestures for more milk, label the action, "It looks like you're trying to tell me you want more milk," then respond to the nonverbal request rather than requiring children to "ask" for more.*

CLICK



Facilitator: ***Enhance verbal communication with additional supports.*** Nonverbal supports provide dual language learners access to verbal communication. Communication that the child can easily understand is essential for building relationships.

- *For children who speak very little English, use body language such as facial expressions, gestures, or pointing to objects.*

STEP 2:
LEARN *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE

FACILITATOR'S NOTES



Facilitator:

- Learn words in the home language that are important to the child, such as “mom,” “dad,” “blanket,” or “sad.”



Facilitator:

Provide opportunities for children to use their home languages. Support for the home language helps children develop a positive sense of identity and learn language—both the home language and English.

- If you speak the home language, have extended conversations or offer small-group activities in the home language.
- If you do not speak the home language, ask children or family members to provide key words in the home language. Invite family members or staff members who speak the home language to talk, read, and sing with children in the home language.




Facilitator:

Welcoming children's home languages strengthens dual language learners' social-emotional, language and literacy, and cognitive development.



STEP 3: PRACTICE

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE

Step 3

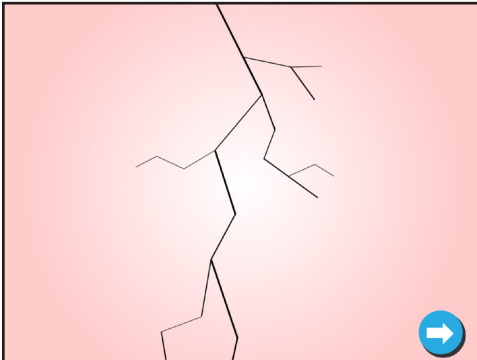



Let's help Alexis think about how she can connect with a three-year-old child, Mei-Mei.

What happened here?



FACILITATOR'S NOTES

[5 min]

CLICK 

Step 3 - Practice

Facilitator: *Let's help Alexis think about how she can connect with a three-year-old child, Mei-Mei.*



Reference handout.

 **"Connecting with Mei-Mei"**

Ask a volunteer to read the brief scenario.

Facilitator: *Mei-Mei is in her second week in a new preschool. She speaks only Mandarin at home, and her first exposure to English is in preschool. As Mei-Mei builds in the block area, she looks at Alexis and says, "Jiā." Alexis replies, "Uh-huh," and walks away.*

CLICK 

Facilitator: *What happened here?*



Invite participants to share their ideas. If participants need guidance, facilitate a discussion around the teacher's missed opportunity to connect with Mei-Mei and support the use of the home language.

CLICK 

Facilitator: *If you were coaching Alexis, what might you suggest to turn this interaction into an opportunity to connect with Mei-Mei?*



Invite participants to share their ideas. Possible responses include:

- Use eye contact, nods, and smiles to connect with Mei-Mei.
- Acknowledge what Mei-Mei said by repeating the word in Mandarin. If you know that the word "jiā" means "home" in Mandarin, you can add in English, "You're building a home with blocks."

STEP 3: PRACTICE *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE

FACILITATOR'S NOTES



- Ask a colleague or child who speaks Mandarin if you do not understand what Mei-Mei said.
- Sit and build with Mei-Mei. As you build, label what you both are doing and ask closed questions you know Mei-Mei can respond to in English or with nonverbal communication.

Facilitator: *Beyond this interaction, what are other ways Alexis can provide opportunities for Mei-Mei to use her home language?*



- Invite participants to share their ideas. Possible responses include:
- Invite Mei-Mei's family members or staff members who speak Mandarin to read a story or lead a small-group activity in Mandarin.
 - Learn some short phrases or simple songs in Mandarin to sing during circle time (use audio-recorded songs as a support).
 - Encourage Mandarin-speaking peers to interact with Mei-Mei in their home language.
 - Ask Mei-Mei's family to tell you some important words in Mandarin that you can post around the classroom to use with Mei-Mei.

CLICK

Facilitator: *Look for opportunities to connect with dual language learners and support their home languages.*



Look for opportunities to connect with dual language learners and support their home languages.




Go to step 4: EXPAND



STEP 4: EXPAND

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE


Step 4




Think about how you welcome dual language learners and support their home languages.

Choose one of the following practices to focus on in the next week:






FACILITATOR'S NOTES

[4 min]

CLICK 

Step 4 - Expand

Facilitator: *Think about how you welcome dual language learners and support their home languages.*

CLICK 

Facilitator: *Choose one of the following practices to focus on in the next week:*

- **Interact** warmly and responsively.
- **Enhance** verbal communication with additional supports.
- **Provide** opportunities for children to use their home languages.

*Write down **one action step** to strengthen this practice in the next week.*








Give participants time to individually reflect. Ask for volunteers to share their action steps.

Possible responses include:

- Improve my nonverbal communication with dual language learners, such as making eye contact, smiling, and using gestures.
- Pay attention to children's verbal and nonverbal attempts at communication.
- Ask parents to audio record themselves reading a book in their home language to put in the book area.
- Ask families to share important words and greetings in the home language. Post these words in prominent places

STEP 4: EXPAND *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">  <p>Warm interactions and support for the home language help us connect with young dual language learners.</p>   </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>in the environment to remind you to use them while interacting with children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan a small-group activity in a child's home language. Lead the activity yourself, or invite another adult to lead the activity if you do not speak the home language. <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Facilitator: <i>Warm interactions and support for the home language help us connect with young dual language learners. This connection helps them feel comfortable participating in the learning environment and practicing language.</i></p>

THIS PD2GO PACK WAS INFORMED BY THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:

- Burchinal, M., Field, S., López, M. L., Howes, C., & Pianta, R. (2013). *Instruction in Spanish and outcomes for pre-kindergarten English language learners*. Retrieved from <http://curry.virginia.edu/resource-library/castl-research-brief-instruction-in-spanish-and-outcomes-for-pre-k-english>
- California Department of Education. (2007). *A world full of language: Supporting preschool English learners*. Sacramento, CA: Author.
- Castro, D. C., Espinosa, L. M., & Páez, M. M. (2011). Defining and measuring quality in early childhood practices that promote dual language learners' development and learning. In M. Zaslow, I. Martinez Beck, K. Tout, & T. Halle (Eds.), *Quality measurement in early childhood settings* (pp. 257–280). Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Company.
- Zero to Three. (2008). *Dual language learners in early care and education settings*. Washington, DC: Author.