

THE POWER OF CONNECTING WITH MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

Teaching with CLASS® Podcast

Season 4 Episode 17

Guest: Karen Nemef



Welcome to a valuable resource summarizing key insights from our Teaching with CLASS® podcast episode featuring Karen Nemeth, where she provides key takeaways on connecting with multilingual learners in the classroom.

+ Understanding Multilingual Learners:

Karen emphasizes the importance of understanding who multilingual learners are. The official definition, established by Head Start, describes them as young children growing up with two or more languages, either simultaneously or sequentially. These children need support in all their languages, regardless of proficiency levels, to foster effective language development.

+ The Superpower of Bilingualism:

Karen highlights that being bilingual is a superpower. She encourages educators to recognize and leverage the strength that multilingualism brings to a child's cognitive development. The official definition doesn't focus on proficiency but stresses the need to support children in all their languages.

+ How Multilingual Learners Thrive:

Karen emphasizes the need for two-way conversations, high-quality instructional interactions, and the importance of teachers making time for each child, especially those facing language barriers. She underscores the significance of supporting home language, which, surprisingly, enhances a child's proficiency in English.

+ Engaging in "Banking Time":

Highlighting 'banking time' as a crucial strategy to build connections, Karen provides practical tips, including arranging banking time around play materials of interest to the child, asking open-ended, multi-purpose questions in different languages to foster communication, and collaborating with parents to learn specific words or phrases in the child's home language, promoting a partnership between home and school.

+ Key Takeaways for Teachers:

Ensure personalized attention for every child, even those not ready to fully communicate verbally; integrate the child's home language to aid comprehension and participation; and create a supportive environment where each child feels seen, heard, and confident by observing and knowing their interests.

Connecting with multilingual learners involves recognizing their strengths beyond language, fostering inclusive environments through personal connections, and celebrating the unique contributions of every child.

To listen to this episode and read the transcript, visit <https://info.teachstone.com/blog/the-power-of-connecting-with-multilingual-learners>

