**Some Challenges for Students learning EAL**

The Learning of EAL students in the mainstream classroom is influenced by their own heritage, culture and home language. The following lists show some areas which commonly create difficulties for EAL learners throughout the curriculum because of gaps in knowledge.

(Adapted from: *Writing in English as an additional language* *at KS4 and Post-16*

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**Speaking and listening:**

**Pronunciation** – especially r/w, v/w; emphasis on wrong syllable, silent letters, ‘magic e’, homonyms e.g. live (long vowel) and live (short vowel); present and present; many inconsistencies in using phonics in English

**Mishearing** – similar sounding words when the speaker has not spoken clearly e.g. affect/effect/infect; omitted word endings and abbreviated words e.g. could have/ could of; have to/after…

**Past Tense** - ‘ed’ ending has 3 sounds: d (dragged), t (walked), id (wanted)

**Accents** from different areas and countries

**Definite and indefinite articles** – the, a an

**Reading:**

**Vocabulary** – on 3 levels

Technical - the key words for a lesson

Subject specific – assumed vocabulary

Carrying language – assumed knowledge of English

**Syntactical knowledge** – (sentence order) can give clues to the meaning of unknown words

**Cultural references** – often lack of knowledge about any culture other than their own but most commonly English culture and heritage, including biblical references

**Inference** – reading between the lines to work out meaning

**Idioms** – assumed general knowledge (life experiences), sometimes linked with culture and heritage. Similes and metaphors taken literally.

**Writing:**

**Spelling mistakes** – even from the text/resource and Americanisms

**Homophones/homonyms** – wear, where to, two

**Possessives and apostrophes for omission**

**Case -** inappropriate use of capital letters –- wrong place or not used

**Punctuation** – none, or limited range. Omission of ? and ! or too many – one is enough for formal writing

**Pronouns** – use of and mistakes in (he and she confusion because of unfamiliar names)

**Tenses of verbs** – especially past tense - ‘t’ sound for ‘ed’, irregular past tense e.g. speak/spoke, take/took (tooken)/was taken. Also mixing tenses inappropriately/inconsistently

**Passive voice** – ‘be’s’ used instead of ‘is’ and ‘was’ etc

**Use of third person** for reports along with passive voice

**Subject/verb agreement** – plural subject with singular verb and vice- versa

**Prepositions** – confusion about which to use: to, in, at, with, from, before, under etc.

**Comparatives and superlatives** – more better, more newer etc

**Direct and reported speech** - confusion

**Idioms** – see in Reading above

**Vocabulary** – see in Reading above

**Use of a Dictionary** with multiple meanings and parts of speech and a **Thesaurus** to vary/improve vocabulary – words inappropriate for the context

**Countables** and **uncountables** – some, much, many, most, more, few, several, both, pair, suit (cards) pack…

**Singular nouns** that stand for a **plural idea** e.g. staff (not staffs),

**Modal verbs** – could, would, should.

**Wrong word family/part of speech** – advise (verb) advice (noun); adulthood/adultery

**Sentence starters** – Lack of variety e.g adverbs (sadly), prepositional phrases (As he entered,…), Sitting at the back,…