

Guiding the Conversation

This learning guide is designed for use by professional learning communities, learning coaches, teacher-leaders or as a self-paced study to facilitate critical reflection about the classroom and school practices that support the inclusion of newcomer students.

This conversation guide is intended to be used after viewing the video clip “First Impressions (and how to improve them).” The video presentation is supported by power point slides “first impressions.”



Questions for Discussion

Coehlo comments that Canada’s multicultural policies ensure that people can participate in all aspects of Canadian life, while also being able to retain aspects of one’s heritage culture. What does this mean for schools with students of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds?

In your experience, have you seen other examples of ways that schools welcome newcomer students?

What ideas could be incorporated in your school or district even if there is no access to services such as interpreters or cultural brokers?

The participants are asked to address key questions about the practices in their schools. How would you respond?

- When newcomers arrive at your school what is their first impression?
- Is there evidence that the school values cultural and linguistic diversity?
- Do newcomer students and their parents feel welcome, included, valued – whether they speak English or not?
- What is done (or what more could be done) to create a good first impression?

Calgary Regional Consortium, University of Calgary
As part of the AlbertaPD project www.albertapd.ca

Video Guide

Synopsis:

Coehlo addresses 7 common themes of the immigrant experience

Coehlo describes the 4 stages of cultural adjustment

Coehlo presents examples of ways to welcome newcomer students and to create a positive first impression. These include:

- Signs/display materials
- Student guides/ambassadors
- Parent orientation materials
- Parent networks

