Tips for Music and Conversation Class

Engaging ESOL students in conversation...

- The main goal of this class is to encourage students to speak as much as possible. If the topic of conversation drifts, that is okay, as long as students are engaged in conversation
- Utilize visual clues and gestures as much as possible
- Face students when speaking to them so they can see how you move your mouth for specific pronunciations (some also find it helpful to read your lips)
- When introducing a new word, ask students to think of an example in their own life, or to use the word in the sentence. Model this by using your own example. Use gestures when possible
- During conversation break-outs, encourage students to simply listen and speak, rather than writing anything down. Model this by not writing anything down yourself.
- Ensure that all students are engaged in conversation. If one student is particularly quiet, ask them direct questions. You may need to simplify your question for them. It may also be helpful to engage them in conversation one on one.
- Provide positive feedback as much as possible. Recognize students contributions by saying "that's great," "wonderful," or "thank you for sharing." Clap at the end of songs. Give as many accolades as possible.
- Encourage students to speak English as much as possible

When learning a new song...

- Write song lyrics on board in large print
- Read chorally first: have volunteer read one word at a time and students repeat
- Have volunteer follow the words with their finger on the board
- Offer students bookmarks to follow along with lines
- Lower-level students may benefit from having a volunteer sit next to them to help them follow along

When transcribing…

- Use the Language Experience Approach (LEA), in which you transcribe exactly what students say, regardless of grammatical errors
- Write as much down on the board as you can, even if responses are short phrases or one word (but still encourage students to use complete sentences)
- Remind students that they should not be writing down what you have on the board; they should just be listening
- Write largely and neatly