

An English language learner, or ELL, is a student who has extra support learning English in school. There are 4.9 million ELLs in the United States.*



**In 2016, according to the National Center for Education Statistics*

Identifying a student as an ELL



1. You answered questions about the languages you use at home.



2. A test measured your child's academic English skills in listening, reading, speaking, and writing.



3. Your child can have instruction in English, in addition to other classes.

ELLs take an academic English language test every year. Test information helps teachers plan how best to teach your child. Test scores also help teachers know when your child can stop receiving English language support. You can use test information to advocate for your child at school. Talk with your child's teachers about:

- When you will receive test scores and how to track your child's progress.
- How you can support your child's language learning at home.
- How support changes as your child builds academic English language skills.
- When students stop receiving English language support.

Questions you can ask

- What are the goals for my child?
- How does learning English fit with other skills my child is learning?
- How do you include students' languages and cultures at school?

Ask about English language learning at your child's school.

Students are tested every year, but you have the right to accept or decline language support.

ACCESS for ELLs

Understanding Your Child's Scores

ACCESS for ELLs is an English language proficiency test that measures students' academic English language skills.

- Schools, school districts, and states use ACCESS for ELLs scores as they decide what English language support services to provide.
- Teachers use test scores as they decide how best to teach your child.
- You can use test scores to advocate for your child.



The Individual Student Report shows your child's ACCESS for ELLs scores in eight different categories. Four of these categories are the language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. These four language domain scores are combined to create four additional score types:

- The oral language category is a combination of your child's Listening and Speaking scores.
- The literacy category is a combination of your child's Reading and Writing scores.
- The comprehension category is a combination of your child's Listening and Reading scores. It depends more on the Reading score than on the Listening score.

ELL

An English language learner, or ELL, is a student who has the opportunity to receive instruction in English, in addition to taking other classes. ELLs are tested every year to help teachers understand their language skills, but you have the right to accept or decline language support.

Language Domain

Students use listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to learn academic content, share information, and discuss ideas. These are skills that all students work on throughout their education. Language testing measures a student's skills in all four of these domains.

- The overall category is a combination of all four language domain scores. It depends more on the Reading and Writing scores than on the Listening and Speaking scores.

For each of the eight categories on the Individual Student Report, there are two scores:

- Proficiency level scores place your child's current skills within the six WIDA English Language Proficiency Levels. (Proficiency levels are not related to a student's grade level.) The bottom of the Individual Student Report describes the language skills typical of your child's proficiency level.
- Scale scores are precise measures of how your child did on the test. They take into account your child's grade level and the difficulty of the test items your child completed. Teachers use these scores to understand how much your child's English language skills have grown since the last time your child took ACCESS for ELLs.



Language Proficiency

A language proficiency level is a measurement of where students are in the ongoing process of building language skills. When students reach the highest levels of language proficiency, they no longer need language support services.

Questions you can ask

- What does this score mean? Who will see this score and how will it be used?
- How do this year's scores compare with previous scores? Is my child making progress in building English language skills? What other information do you use to measure progress?
- Will this score change the instruction or support my child receives? How do you decide when my child stops receiving language support?

School districts use **ACCESS for ELLs** scores to evaluate language support programs, monitor student progress, and as one factor in the decision to exit a student from language support services. ACCESS for ELLs testing allows schools to meet federal and state accountability requirements.



WIDA[™]

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Can Do Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster 3-5

For the given level of English language proficiency and with visual, graphic, or interactive support through Level 4, English language learners can process or produce the **language** needed to:

	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 - Reaching
LISTENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to stated pictures, words, or phrases Follow one-step oral directions (e.g., physically or through drawings) Identify objects, figures, people from oral statements or questions (e.g., “Which one is a rock?”) Match classroom oral language to daily routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categorize content-based pictures or objects from oral descriptions Arrange pictures or objects per oral information Follow two-step oral directions Draw in response to oral descriptions Evaluate oral information (e.g., about lunch options) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow multi-step oral directions Identify illustrated main ideas from paragraph-level oral discourse Match literal meanings of oral descriptions or oral reading to illustrations Sequence pictures from oral stories, processes, or procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret oral information and apply to new situations Identify illustrated main ideas and supporting details from oral discourse Infer from and act on oral information Role play the work of authors, mathematicians, scientists, historians from oral readings, videos, or multi-media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out oral instructions containing grade-level, content-based language Construct models or use manipulatives to problem-solve based on oral discourse Distinguish between literal and figurative language in oral discourse Form opinions of people, places, or ideas from oral scenarios 	
SPEAKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express basic needs or conditions Name pre-taught objects, people, diagrams, or pictures Recite words or phrases from pictures of everyday objects and oral modeling Answer yes/no and choice questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask simple, everyday questions (e.g., “Who is absent?”) Restate content-based facts Describe pictures, events, objects, or people using phrases or short sentences Share basic social information with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer simple content-based questions Re/tell short stories or events Make predictions or hypotheses from discourse Offer solutions to social conflict Present content-based information Engage in problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer opinion questions with supporting details Discuss stories, issues, and concepts Give content-based oral reports Offer creative solutions to issues/problems Compare/contrast content-based functions and relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justify/defend opinions or explanations with evidence Give content-based presentations using technical vocabulary Sequence steps in grade-level problem-solving Explain in detail results of inquiry (e.g., scientific experiments) 	

The Can Do Descriptors work in conjunction with the WIDA Performance Definitions of the English language proficiency standards. The Performance Definitions use three criteria (1. linguistic complexity; 2. vocabulary usage; and 3. language control) to describe the increasing quality and quantity of students’ language processing and use across the levels of language proficiency.

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READING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match icons or diagrams with words/concepts Identify cognates from first language, as applicable Make sound/symbol/word relations Match illustrated words/phrases in differing contexts (e.g., on the board, in a book) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify facts and explicit messages from illustrated text Find changes to root words in context Identify elements of story grammar (e.g., characters, setting) Follow visually supported written directions (e.g., “Draw a star in the sky.”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret information or data from charts and graphs Identify main ideas and some details Sequence events in stories or content-based processes Use context clues and illustrations to determine meaning of words/phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classify features of various genres of text (e.g., “and they lived happily ever after”—fairy tales) Match graphic organizers to different texts (e.g., compare/contrast with Venn diagram) Find details that support main ideas Differentiate between fact and opinion in narrative and expository text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize information from multiple related sources Answer analytical questions about grade-level text Identify, explain, and give examples of figures of speech Draw conclusions from explicit and implicit text at or near grade level 	
WRITING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Label objects, pictures, or diagrams from word/phrase banks Communicate ideas by drawing Copy words, phrases, and short sentences Answer oral questions with single words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make lists from labels or with peers Complete/produce sentences from word/phrase banks or walls Fill in graphic organizers, charts, and tables Make comparisons using real-life or visually-supported materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce simple expository or narrative text String related sentences together Compare/contrast content-based information Describe events, people, processes, procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take notes using graphic organizers Summarize content-based information Author multiple forms of writing (e.g., expository, narrative, persuasive) from models Explain strategies or use of information in solving problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce extended responses of original text approaching grade level Apply content-based information to new contexts Connect or integrate personal experiences with literature/content Create grade-level stories or reports 	

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