

**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**<sup>™</sup>

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## Can Do Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster PreK-K

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"> <li>Match oral language to classroom and everyday objects</li> <li>Point to stated pictures in context</li> <li>Respond non-verbally to oral commands or statements (e.g., through physical movement)</li> <li>Find familiar people and places named orally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sort pictures or objects according to oral instructions</li> <li>Match pictures, objects or movements to oral descriptions</li> <li>Follow one-step oral directions (e.g., “stand up”; “sit down”)</li> <li>Identify simple patterns described orally</li> <li>Respond with gestures to songs, chants, or stories modeled by teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow two-step oral directions, one step at a time</li> <li>Draw pictures in response to oral instructions</li> <li>Respond non-verbally to confirm or deny facts (e.g., thumbs up, thumbs down)</li> <li>Act out songs and stories using gestures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find pictures that match oral descriptions</li> <li>Follow oral directions and compare with visual or nonverbal models (e.g., “Draw a circle under the line.”)</li> <li>Distinguish between what happens first and next in oral activities or readings</li> <li>Role play in response to stories read aloud</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order pictures of events according to sequential language</li> <li>Arrange objects or pictures according to descriptive oral discourse</li> <li>Identify pictures/realia associated with grade-level academic concepts from oral descriptions</li> <li>Make patterns from real objects or pictures based on detailed oral descriptions</li> </ul>	
SPEAKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify people or objects in illustrated short stories</li> <li>Repeat words, simple phrases</li> <li>Answer yes/no questions about personal information</li> <li>Name classroom and everyday objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restate some facts from illustrated short stories</li> <li>Describe pictures, classroom objects or familiar people using simple phrases</li> <li>Answer questions with one or two words (e.g., “Where is Sonia?”)</li> <li>Complete phrases in rhymes, songs, and chants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retell short narrative stories through pictures</li> <li>Repeat sentences from rhymes and patterned stories</li> <li>Make predictions (e.g. “What will happen next?”)</li> <li>Answer explicit questions from stories read aloud (e.g., who, what, or where)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retell narrative stories through pictures with emerging detail</li> <li>Sing repetitive songs and chants independently</li> <li>Compare attributes of real objects (e.g., size, shape, color)</li> <li>Indicate spatial relations of real-life objects using phrases or short sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell original stories with emerging detail</li> <li>Explain situations (e.g., involving feelings)</li> <li>Offer personal opinions</li> <li>Express likes, dislikes, or preferences with reasons</li> </ul>	

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.

## Can Do Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster PreK-K

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
READING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match icons and symbols to corresponding pictures</li> <li>Identify name in print</li> <li>Find matching words or pictures</li> <li>Find labeled real-life classroom objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match examples of the same form of print</li> <li>Distinguish between same and different forms of print (e.g., single letters and symbols)</li> <li>Demonstrate concepts of print (e.g., left to right movement, beginning/end, or top/bottom of page)</li> <li>Match labeled pictures to those in illustrated scenes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use pictures to identify words</li> <li>Classify visuals according to labels or icons (e.g., animals v. plants)</li> <li>Demonstrate concepts of print (e.g., title, author, illustrator)</li> <li>Sort labeled pictures by attribute (e.g., number, initial sound)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some high-frequency words in context</li> <li>Order a series of labeled pictures described orally to tell stories</li> <li>Match pictures to phrases/short sentences</li> <li>Classify labeled pictures by two attributes (e.g., size and color)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find school-related vocabulary items</li> <li>Differentiate between letters, words, and sentences</li> <li>String words together to make short sentences</li> <li>Indicate features of words, phrases, or sentences that are the same and different</li> </ul>	
WRITING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw pictures and scribble</li> <li>Circle or underline pictures, symbols, and numbers</li> <li>Trace figures and letters</li> <li>Make symbols, figures or letters from models and realia (e.g., straws, clay)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect oral language to print (e.g., language experience)</li> <li>Reproduce letters, symbols, and numbers from models in context</li> <li>Copy icons of familiar environmental print</li> <li>Draw objects from models and label with letters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate using letters, symbols, and numbers in context</li> <li>Make illustrated “notes” and cards with distinct letter combinations</li> <li>Make connections between speech and writing</li> <li>Reproduce familiar words from labeled models or illustrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce symbols and strings of letters associated with pictures</li> <li>Draw pictures and use words to tell a story</li> <li>Label familiar people and objects from models</li> <li>Produce familiar words/phrases from environmental print and illustrated text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create content-based representations through pictures and words</li> <li>Make “story books” with drawings and words</li> <li>Produce words/phrases independently</li> <li>Relate everyday experiences using phrases/short sentences</li> </ul>	

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