

# Tier Placement Protocol for ACCESS for ELLs®



ACCESS for ELLs is divided into three tiers: A, B, and C. While the tiers overlap, each tier assesses a different range of language proficiency. Therefore, to ensure the best possible testing experience for each student and the most meaningful results, it is necessary to place each student into the tier that best matches his or her proficiency level.

The selection of a student’s tier is best made by his or her teachers, based on the information they have about the student’s language proficiency. Criteria may include the student’s progress in the classroom as well as test results from past administrations of ACCESS for ELLs, WIDA MODEL, Kindergarten W-APT, and/or WIDA Screener.

It is important to note that it is very difficult for students who take the Tier A assessment to score higher than a 4.0 proficiency level in the domains of Reading and Listening. Likewise, it is very difficult for students who take the Tier B assessment to receive higher than 5.0 on Reading or Listening. For this reason, students who are nearing these proficiency levels should be assigned the next higher tier so that their ability to show progress in these domains is not limited.

Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 - Reaching
<p><b>TIER A</b> is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have arrived in the U.S. or entered school in the U.S. within this academic school year without previous instruction in English, OR</li> <li>• currently receive literacy instruction ONLY in their native language, OR</li> <li>• have recently tested at the lowest level of English language proficiency</li> </ul>					
<p><b>TIER B</b> is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have social language proficiency and some, but not extensive, academic language proficiency in English, OR</li> <li>• have acquired some literacy in English though have not yet reached grade level literacy</li> </ul>					
<p><b>TIER C</b> is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are approaching grade level in literacy and academic language proficiency in the core content areas, OR</li> <li>• will likely meet the state’s exit criteria for support services by the end of the academic year</li> </ul>					