



Promoting  
Language Learning  
and Academic  
Success in the  
Content Areas for  
English Learners

Now with Common Core

ELEMENTARY



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Each year classrooms in the United States are becoming more ethnically and linguistically diverse. Educators need to prepare their lessons and classrooms in differing ways in order to teach content effectively to English Learners (ELs). It is recognized that all educators need support in the area of working with these students in order to ensure that all English Learners succeed in school and become productive citizens. Therefore, these guidelines were designed to offer classroom strategies that are critical

components to be utilized when instructing ELs. These guidelines offer educators research-based practices that have been proven effective for increasing academic achievement for ELs in today's classrooms. It is with this model of instruction in mind, that these guidelines have been designed to assist educators in acquiring more knowledge about implementing good practices when working with ELs in their classrooms.





# The Cornerstone of WIDA's Standards: Guiding Principles of Language Development

1. Students's languages and cultures are valuable resources to be tapped and incorporated into schooling.
2. Students' home, school, and community experiences influence their language development.
3. Students draw on their metacognitive, metalinguistic, and metacultural awareness to develop proficiency in additional languages.
4. Students' academic language development in their native language facilitates their academic language development in English. Conversely, students' academic language development in English informs their academic language development in their native language.
5. Students learn language and culture through meaningful use and interaction.
6. Students use language in functional and communicative ways that vary according to context.
7. Students develop language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing interdependently, but at different rates and in different ways.
8. Students' development of academic language and academic content knowledge are inter-related processes.
9. Students' development of social, instructional, and academic language, a complex and long-term process, is the foundation for their success in school.
10. Students' access to instructional tasks requiring complex thinking is enhanced when linguistic complexity and instructional support match their levels of language proficiency.

*\*Adapted from WIDA Guiding Principles/WIDA Draft ELD Standards, available at [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us).*



# The Defining Features of Academic Language in WIDA's Standards

	Performance Criteria	Features	Examples
<b>Discourse Level</b>	<b>Discourse Complexity</b> <i>(Quantity and variety of oral and written text)</i>	Amount of speech/written text Structure of speech/written text Density of speech/written text Organization and cohesion of ideas Variety of sentence types	Voice Mood Cohesive forms (referential, repetition) Coherence (e.g., topic and comment and key words for written language: relevance, sequencing, and closing relevant to topic for oral language) Logical connectors Parallelism Organizational types (e.g., narration, exposition, description)
<b>Sentence Level</b>	<b>Language Forms and Conventions</b> <i>(Types, array, and use of language structures)</i>	Types and variety of grammatical structures Conventions, mechanics, and fluency Match of language forms to purpose/perspective	Tense Aspect (e.g., progressive, perfect tenses) Simple, compound, and complex sentences Word order Parallelism Denotation and connotations Formulaic expressions Interrogatives Prosodic features (e.g., stress, intonation, rhythm of speech) Agreement (e.g., subject/verb)
<b>Word/Phrase Level</b>	<b>Vocabulary Usage</b> <i>(Specificity of word or phrase choice)</i>	General, specific, and technical language Multiple meanings of words and phrases Formulaic and idiomatic expressions Nuances and shades of meaning Collocations	Sound-symbol-spelling correspondence Word formations (e.g., affixes, compounding) Count/non-count distinctions Denotation and connotation Possession (e.g., possessives)

\*Adapted from WIDA Defining Features of Academic Language in WIDA's Standards, available at [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us).



# Stages of Language Proficiency

<p><b>Stage:</b> At the given level of English language proficiency, English language learners will process, understand, produce, or use:</p>	<p><b>Student Ability with Support</b></p>		
<p><b>ENTERING:</b></p>	<p><b>PreK - K</b></p>	<p><b>Grade Levels 1 - 2</b></p>	<p><b>Grade Levels 3 - 5</b></p>
<p>Pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas</p> <p>Words or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, or yes/no questions, or statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support</p> <p>Oral language with errors that often impede meaning when presented with basic oral commands, direct questions, or simple statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support</p>	<p>Match social language to visual graphic displays</p> <p>Identify people or objects in illustrated short stories</p> <p>Answer yes/no questions about personal information</p> <p>Repeat words, simple phrases</p> <p>Point to stated pictures in context</p>	<p>Follow modeled, one-step oral directions</p> <p>Participate in whole group chants and songs</p> <p>Respond to visually-supported questions of academic content with one word or phrase</p> <p>Connect print to visuals</p> <p>Identify symbols, icons, and environmental print</p>	<p>Identify objects, figures, and people from oral statements or questions.</p> <p>Answer yes/no and multiple choice questions</p> <p>Make sound/symbol/word relations</p> <p>Match icons or diagrams with words/concepts</p> <p>Label objects, pictures, or diagrams from word/phrase banks</p>



## Stages of Language Proficiency, continued

Stage	Student Ability with Support		
EMERGING:	PreK - K	Grade Levels 1 - 2	Grade Levels 3 - 5
<p>General language related to the content areas</p> <p>Phrases or short sentences</p> <p>Errors in oral or written language that often impede the meaning of the communication when presented with one- to multiple-step directions, questions, or a series of statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support</p>	<p>Sort pictures according to oral instructions</p> <p>Restate some facts from illustrated short stories</p> <p>Describe pictures and classroom objects using simple phrases</p> <p>Reproduce letters, symbols, and numbers from models in context</p>	<p>Sequence a series of oral statements using real objects or pictures</p> <p>Locate objects described orally</p> <p>Describe what people do from action pictures (e.g., jobs of community workers)</p> <p>Compare real-life objects (e.g., "smaller," "biggest")</p> <p>Create lists of words/phrases from banks or word walls</p>	<p>Identify facts from illustrated text</p> <p>Identify elements of story (e.g., characters, setting)</p> <p>Complete/produce sentences from word/phrase banks</p> <p>Categorize content-based pictures or objects per oral information</p> <p>Restate content-based facts</p>



## Stages of Language Proficiency, continued

Stage	Student Ability with Support		
DEVELOPING:	PreK - K	Grade Levels 1 - 2	Grade Levels 3 - 5
<p>General and some specific language of the content areas</p> <p>Expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs</p> <p>Oral or written language with errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning when presented with oral, written, narrative, or expository descriptions with sensory, graphic, or interactive support</p>	<p>Follow two-step oral instructions, one step at a time</p> <p>Draw pictures in response to oral instructions</p> <p>Make predictions (e.g., "What will happen next?")</p> <p>Answer questions from stories read aloud (who, what, where)</p> <p>Reproduce familiar words from labeled models or illustrations</p>	<p>Follow modeled multi-step oral directions</p> <p>Classify objects according to descriptive oral statements</p> <p>Retell simple stories from picture cues</p> <p>Distinguish features of content-based phenomena (e.g., caterpillar, butterfly)</p> <p>Engage in prewriting strategies (e.g., use of graphic organizers)</p>	<p>Answer simple content-based questions</p> <p>Identify main ideas and some details</p> <p>Sequence events in stories</p> <p>Produce simple expository or narrative text</p> <p>Compare/contrast content-based information</p>



## Stages of Language Proficiency, continued

Stage	Student Ability with Support		
EXPANDING:	PreK - K	Grade Levels 1 - 2	Grade Levels 3 - 5
<p>Specific and some technical language of the content areas</p> <p>A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related sentences, or paragraphs in written texts</p> <p>Minimal errors in oral or written language that do not impede the overall meaning of communication when presented with oral or written discourse with sensory, graphic, or interactive support</p>	<p>Find pictures that match oral descriptions</p> <p>Role play in response to stories read aloud</p> <p>Retell narrative stories through pictures with emerging detail</p> <p>Label familiar people and objects from models</p> <p>Compare attributes of real objects (e.g., size, shape)</p>	<p>Compare/contrast objects according to physical attributes (e.g., size, shape, color) based on oral information</p> <p>Find details in illustrated, narrative, or expository text read aloud</p> <p>Retell stories with details</p> <p>Put words in order to form sentences</p> <p>Produce original sentences</p>	<p>Identify illustrated main ideas and supporting details from oral discourse</p> <p>Answer opinion questions with supporting details</p> <p>Give content-based oral reports</p> <p>Summarize content-based information</p> <p>Author multiple forms of writing (e.g., expository, narrative, persuasive) from models</p>



## Stages of Language Proficiency, continued

Stage	Student Ability with Support		
	PreK - K	Grade Levels 1 - 2	Grade Levels 3 - 5
<b>BRIDGING:</b>			
<p>Specialized or technical language of the content areas</p> <p>A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays, or reports</p> <p>Oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers</p>	<p>Identify pictures/realia associated with academic concepts from oral descriptions</p> <p>Tell original stories with emerging detail</p> <p>Offer personal opinions</p> <p>Differentiate between letters, words, and sentences</p> <p>Make "story books" with drawings and words</p>	<p>Use academic vocabulary in class discussions</p> <p>Give oral presentations on content-based topics</p> <p>Use learning strategies (e.g., context clues)</p> <p>Produce content-related sentences</p> <p>Compose stories</p>	<p>Carry out oral instructions containing content-based language</p> <p>Give content-based presentations using technical vocabulary</p> <p>Create stories or reports</p> <p>Identify, explain, and give examples of figures of speech</p> <p>Summarize information from multiple related sources</p>

*"Adapted from the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards and Resource Guide, 2007 Edition, available at [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)"*



# Sheltered Instruction

Sheltered instructional strategies can be implemented by all teachers using special techniques and strategies designed to assist EL students in both language-acquisition and subject-matter content.

To understand the purpose of “Sheltered Instruction”, the umbrella is a useful metaphor. As EL students enter US schools, they face many unfamiliar elements. As an umbrella shelters pedestrians in a rain storm, sheltered instruction gives students protection from the storm of concepts, contexts, and language, giving them the opportunity to progress academically as they are acquiring English language proficiency.

Sheltered methodology emphasizes the concept of comprehensible input - very simply, making concepts understood by the learner. This is accomplished through the use of:

- realia (real objects and materials)
- manipulatives (drawings, posters, brainstorming-clusters, graphs, tables, maps, props, multimedia presentations, storyboards, story maps)
- visuals (study-prints, textbook-illustrations, overhead-projected prints, reproductions of paintings, and documents)
- graphic organizers (matrices, Venn diagrams, and webs)
- planned opportunities for interaction between all individuals in the classroom (creating a skit and acting it out, collaborative learning, and student-generated stories based on personal experiences)

Students who are learning English as an additional language are the fastest growing segment of the school-age population in the United States, and almost all teachers will have linguistically and culturally diverse students in their classrooms during their teaching careers.

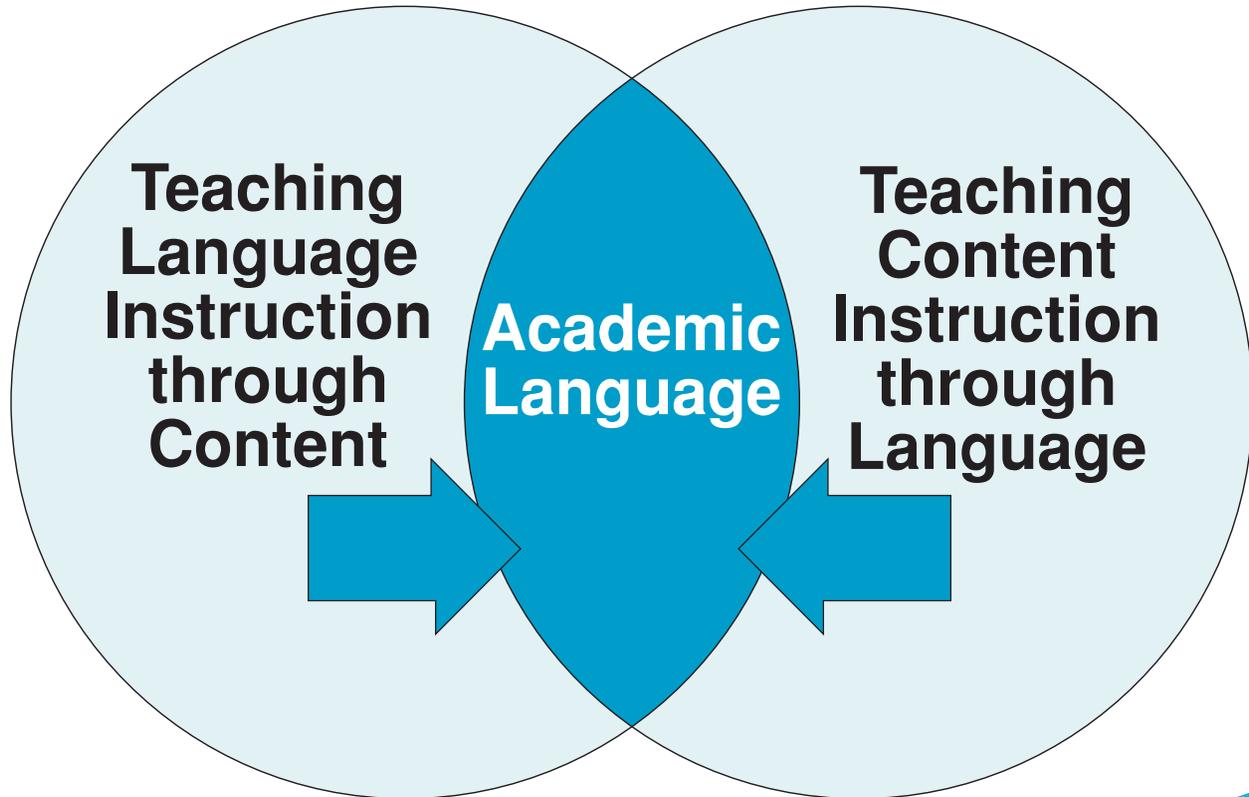
Sheltered instruction is a research-based, professional development model of instruction, an effective approach for teaching both language and content to ELs that can increase English learners’ chances of success in school. The model has been used to implement effective instruction in urban, suburban, and rural districts around the United States.

Sheltered instruction does not mandate cookie-cutter instruction, but it provides a framework for well-prepared and well-delivered lessons for any subject area. The sheltered approach draws from and complements methods and strategies advocated for both second language and mainstream classrooms. Language and content objectives are systematically woven into the curriculum of a particular subject area.

In effective sheltered lessons, there is a high level of student engagement and interaction with the teacher, with other students, and with text, which leads to elaborated discourse and critical thinking. Students are explicitly taught functional language skills. Through instructional conversations and meaningful activities, students practice and apply their new language and content knowledge.



# Academic Language Connects the Language and Content Standards



# Terminology



- **Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English (ACCESS):** the annual English proficiency exam.
- **Basics Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS):** Social Language that can take from two to three years to acquire.
- **Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP):** Academic language associated with schooling, and the abstract language abilities required for academic work. It can take anywhere from 4-6 years to develop.
- **Discourse Complexity:** the organization, cohesion and relationship between ideas expressed in the variety and kinds of sentences that make up different genres and text types in oral or written language
- **English Learners (EL):** students who are learning English as a second or additional language.
- **ESOL:** English to speakers of other languages
- **Features of academic language:** the performance criteria associated with discourse, sentence, and word/phrase levels of oral and written communication; namely, linguistic complexity, language forms and conventions, and vocabulary usage.
- **Instructional supports:** available sensory, graphic, and interactive resources to assist students in constructing meaning from language and content.
- **L1:** First language
- **L2:** Second language
- **Language development standards:** descriptions of the language expectations for students that are marked by specific progressions or levels across the language development continuum.
- **Language domains:** the modalities of language; listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- **Language Forms and Conventions:** the grammatical structures, patterns, syntax, and mechanics associated with the sentence level meaning.
- **Language functions:** linguistic processes required in conveying a message that indicate how ELs are to process or use language to demonstrate their English language development.
- **Language proficiency:** a student's competence in processing (through listening and reading) and using (through speaking and writing) language.
- **Limited English Proficient (LEP):** a term used to refer to a student with restricted understanding or use of written and spoken English.
- **Sheltered Instruction (SI):** teaching content matter to ELs using sheltered instruction techniques. Teachers use scaffolding techniques, adjust speech patterns, and have both content and language objectives present in the classrooms.
- **Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP):** the only research-based model designed for sheltered instruction, by Mary Ellen J. Vogt, Jana A. Echevarria, and Deborah J. Short.
- **Vocabulary Usage:** the specificity of words or phrases for a given context.
- **WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT):** English language proficiency "screener" test given to incoming students who may be designated as English language learners.
- **WIDA Standards –** English Language Development Standards used in Georgia.
- **World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA):** is a consortium of states dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational

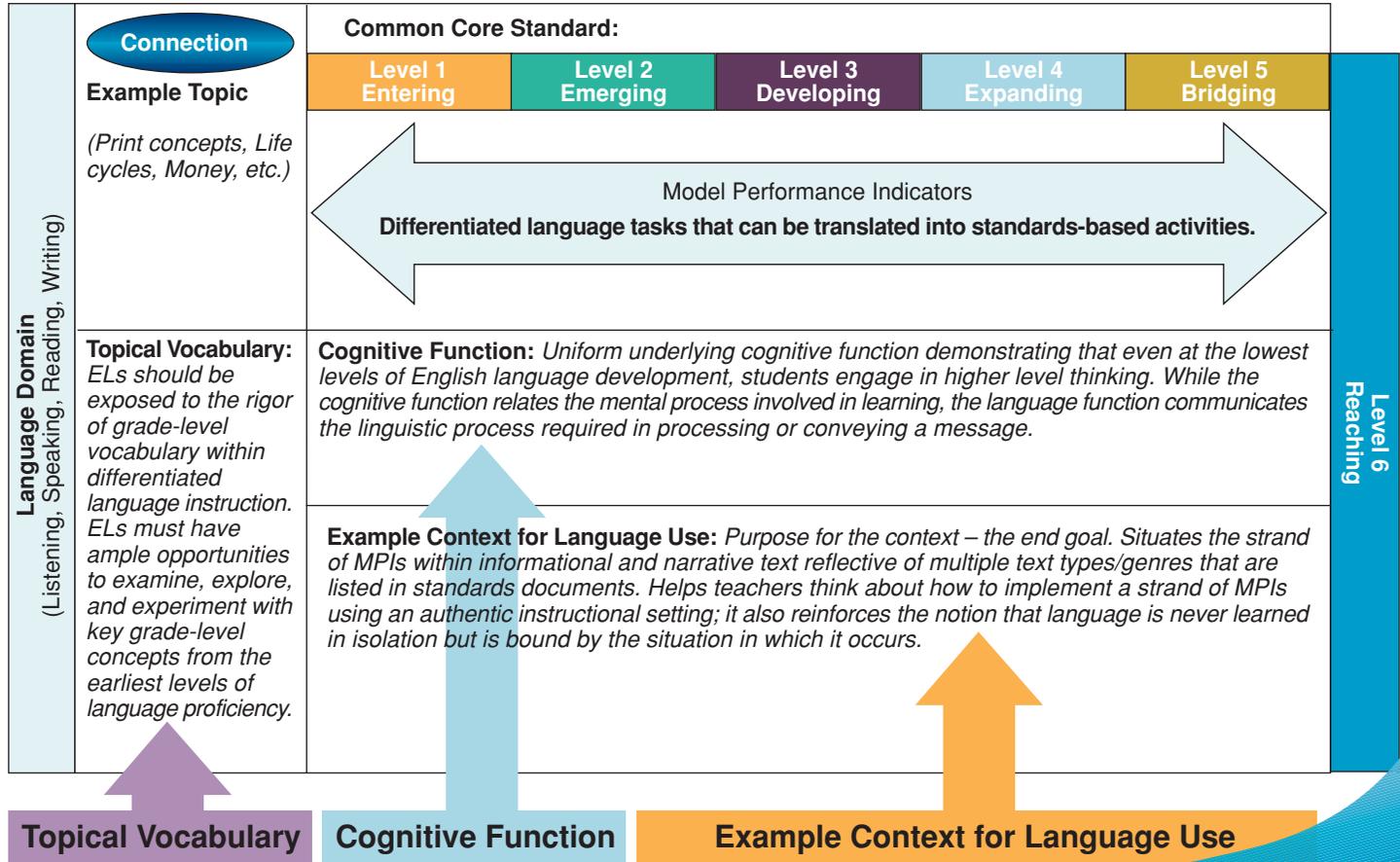


# Differentiated Language Functions and Academic Supports for English Learners

Level 1 - Entering	Level 2 - Emerging	Level 3 - Developing	Levels 4-5 - Expanding/Bridging
Listen Point Match Locate Select Sort Respond Identify Draw Illustrate Circle Name Repeat Copy Trace Define	Predict Label State/Restate Describe Group Respond List Categorize Sequence Answer Tell or Say Ask/Request Classify Create Connect Make lists	Recall Retell Define Explain Summarize Role-play Compare/Contrast Discuss Express Outline Sequence Peer edit Give opinions	Analyze Interpret Justify/Defend Explain (in detail) Elaborate Critique Narrate Conclude Convince Reflect Resolve Infer Synthesize Hypothesize Predict Evaluate
Interactive Supports	Graphic Supports	Sensory Supports	
Clarification in concepts in L1 Pairs or partners Mentors Small group Cooperative grouping structures Interactive websites Software programs	Graphic Organizers (i.e., concept definition maps, Venn diagrams, semantic webs) Timelines Number lines Charts (i.e., pie, T-chart) Tables Graphs	Real life objects (realia) Manipulatives Pictures & photographs Illustrations, diagrams, & drawings Magazines & newspapers Physical activities Streaming video, broadcasts, podcasts	



# WIDA's English Language Development Standard



Level 6  
Reaching



# Standard 2 - Language of Language Arts - KINDERGARTEN

<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"><b>Connection</b></div> <b>Example Topic</b>  Print concepts		<b>Common Core Reading Standards, Foundational Skills #1 (Kindergarten):</b> Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print; a. Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page, b. Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters, c. Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.				
		Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging
<b>LISTENING</b>	<b>Topical Vocabulary:</b> Students at all levels of English language proficiency are exposed to grade-level words and expressions, such as: title, turn the page, front/back cover, left to right, author, illustrator, first name, last name, spaces, lower/upper case letters	Select a feature of text based on instructions involving a choice following a model (e.g., "Is <i>this</i> the title or is <i>this</i> the title?")	Identify features of texts based on simple oral commands following a model (e.g., "Show me the title.")	Answer Wh-questions about features of texts through pointing or speaking and following a model (e.g., "Who wrote this book?")	Answer expanded Wh- questions about features of texts through pointing or speaking and following a model (e.g., "Where do you find the author's name on the title page?")	Identify features of texts based on multi-step oral instructions following a model (e.g., "Find the author's name and underline the upper case letters.")
		<b>Cognitive Function:</b> Students at all levels of English language proficiency REMEMBER concepts about print.				
		<b>Example Context for Language Use:</b> Students follow directions to identify concepts about print (e.g., in a large group the teacher gives instructions and students respond using a fly-swatter mask).				

Level 6  
Teaching



# Standard 3 - Language of Mathematics - 2nd GRADE

<b>READING</b>	<b>Connection</b>	<b>Common Core Standards for Mathematics, Measurement and Data #8 (Grade 2):</b> Solve word problems involving dollar bills, quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies, using \$ and ¢ symbols appropriately.				
	<b>Example Topic</b>					
	Money	<b>Level 1 Entering</b>	<b>Level 2 Emerging</b>	<b>Level 3 Developing</b>	<b>Level 4 Expanding</b>	<b>Level 5 Bridging</b>
	<b>Topical Vocabulary:</b> Students at all levels of English language proficiency are exposed to grade-level words and expressions, such as: cents, dollars, pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters	Identify key words or phrases related to money and value using realia with a partner (e.g., “buy”, “give”, “take away”)	Identify key words and phrases related to money and value and act out exchange of money using realia with a partner	Identify key words and phrases related to money and value in simplified word problems (e.g., written in present tense with familiar contexts) using realia with a partner	Identify language related to money and value in word problems using realia with a partner	Identify details that do not relate to resolution in word problems related to money and value with a partner
		<b>Cognitive Function:</b> Students at all levels of English language proficiency will ANALYZE the relevance of information presented in word problems related to money.				
	<b>Example Context for Language Use:</b> Students read real-life mathematics problems related to money in small groups.					
	<b>Level 6 Reaching</b>					



# Standard 3 - Language of Mathematics - 4th GRADE

<b>WRITING</b>	<b>Connection</b>	<b>Common Core Standards for Mathematics, Geometry #1-2 (Grade 4):</b> Draw points, lines, line segments, rays, angles (right, acute, obtuse), and perpendicular and parallel lines. Identify these in two-dimensional figures. Classify two-dimensional figures based on the presence or absence of parallel or perpendicular lines, or the presence or absence of angles of a specified size. Recognize right triangles as a category, and identify right triangles.				
	<b>Example Topic</b>	Lines & angles				
	<b>Topical Vocabulary:</b> Students at all levels of English language proficiency are exposed to grade-level words and expressions, such as: obtuse, acute, right angle; parallel and perpendicular lines, end points, rays, vertex, line segment, degrees, protractor	<b>Level 1 Entering</b>	<b>Level 2 Emerging</b>	<b>Level 3 Developing</b>	<b>Level 4 Expanding</b>	<b>Level 5 Bridging</b>
		Label lines and angles according to their properties using manipulatives and graphic support	Categorize lines and angles according to their properties using manipulatives and graphic support	Describe lines and angles according to their properties using manipulatives and graphic support	Compare and contrast lines or angles according to their properties using manipulatives and graphic support	Define lines and angles according to their properties (e.g., "My desk has four right angles on the top, which are 90 degrees. Each leg of the desk has two acute angles of 55 degrees each and two obtuse angles of 125 degrees each.")
		<b>Cognitive Function:</b> Students at all levels of English language proficiency will ANALYZE lines and angles according to their properties.				
<b>Example Context for Language Use:</b> Students write about the types and properties of lines and angles they find, measure, and classify in their school, home or community.						

Level 6  
Reaching



# GRADE 1 Expanded Strand Standard 3 - Language of Mathematics

LISTENING	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Connection</b></p> <p><b>Example Topic</b></p>	Common Core Standards for Mathematics, Measurement and Data #1 (Grade 1): Order three objects by length; compare the lengths of two objects indirectly by using a third object.				
		Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging
	Measurement of objects	Match objects with their lengths based on oral discourse with a partner and following a model	Order objects or measurement tools according to their length based on oral discourse with a partner and following a model	Categorize objects according to their lengths and corresponding measurement tools based on oral discourse with a partner and following a model	Follow oral instructions to compare the lengths of objects with a partner and a template	Follow multi-step oral instructions and respond to grade level oral discourse to compare the lengths of objects with a partner
Criteria from the Performance Definitions (Example Expectations)	<p><b>Discourse Complexity</b> (Quantity and variety of oral and written text)</p>	<b>Cognitive Function:</b> Students at all levels of English language proficiency will ANALYZE the lengths of objects.				
		<p>Martin measures his desk and his book with a ruler (teacher points to desk, book, and ruler). His desk is 30 inches long, his book is 10 inches long. Which one is 30 inches long? (student points to desk)</p> <p>Martin measures his desk and his book with a popsicle stick (teacher points to desk, book, and popsicle stick). His desk is 6 popsicle sticks long. Which object is 2 popsicle sticks long? (student points to book).</p>	<p>Look at your measurement tools. The paper clip is short. The popsicle stick is longer. The ruler is longest. Put them in order from shortest to longest.</p>	<p>This piece of string is shorter than this piece of string. Show me the longest one. (Student holds up longer piece of string.) The student desk is easier to measure with the shortest string. The teacher desk is easier to measure with the longer string. Why do you think this is? (student explains)</p>	<p>Find the length of the desk using the best measurement tool. Remember, it's easier to measure a long object with a longer measurement tool (Teacher models measuring his/her desk with a popsicle stick, then a ruler). Then measure another object the same way. Don't forget to write down your measurements! Your chart will show the difference in length between the two objects.</p>	<p>First, cut a string as long as your foot. Use the string to find how many of your feet fit across the room (students follow direction). Now, find how many yard sticks (or meter sticks) fit across the room. Write down your measurements and compare them with your partner's measurements (students follow direction). Did you get the same results? Why? (student explains) Why not? (student explains) Explain which measurement tool works best. Which gave you the same measurements, the standard tool (teacher shows yard/meter stick) or the non-standard tool (teacher shows string)?</p>

Level 6  
Reaching



# GRADE 1 Expanded Strand Standard 3 - Language of Mathematics...continued

<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Connection</div> <b>Example Topic</b> Measurement of objects		<b>Common Core Standards for Mathematics, Measurement and Data #1 (Grade 1):</b> Order three objects by length; compare the lengths of two objects indirectly by using a third object.				
		Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging
<b>Criteria from the Performance Definitions (Example Expectations)</b>	<b>Language Forms &amp; Conventions</b> (Types, array, and use of language structures)	one inch two inches I measure Martin measures	short, shorter, shortest long, longer, longest	longer than, the longest one, shorter than, the shortest one, easier	and, but. measure, measuring, measured	First,...then,... as long as
	<b>Vocabulary Usage</b> (Specificity of word or phrase choice)	desk, book paper clip popsicle stick string ruler yard/meter stick	short long measurement tools	piece of shorter than longer than measure with	length of _____ another object	find how many across results
	<b>Example instructional/assessment task (content)</b>	Identify objects that are best measured with a certain tool	Fill in an illustrated chart listing the lengths of different objects from shortest to longest, according to measurement tool	Create charts listing the lengths of different objects according to measurement tool	Measure the same object with multiple tools and decide which tool provides the best measurement	Measure the same object with multiple tools and decide which tool provides the best measurement
	<b>Topical Vocabulary:</b> Students at all levels of English language development are exposed to grade-level words and expressions, such as: inches/centimeters, foot, yard/meter, standard, non-standard, units					
<b>Example Context for Language Use:</b> Students work independently or with a partner to explore the length of objects using standard and non-standard measurement tools (e.g., paper clips, popsicle sticks, string, rulers, yard/meter sticks).						

Level 6  
Reaching



# How to Design Lessons for ELs

- Clearly post and state content objectives and language objectives from the WIDA Standards.
- Plan lessons that involve ELs as part of the whole class.
- Use supplementary materials to make objectives comprehensible to ELs (i.e. audio & video, adapted texts, visuals, concrete objects, household items, food, clothing, books, magazines, occupational items, plants, crafts, ethnic items, and art materials).
- Develop oral and written instructions for activities & assignments. In other words use overheads, explain orally, and **model**.
- Plan interactive lessons that physically engage all students in a meaningful way.
- Plan challenging activities that promote higher order thinking skills.
- Take into consideration students' backgrounds when planning lessons/activities. Be aware of previous schooling, course work, and exposure to topics.
- Provide opportunities for success by alternating difficult tasks with easier ones.
- Design lessons incorporating listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Include opportunities for students to practice and apply the content and language objectives during class time.
- Keep the purpose of the lesson in mind when planning group activities. (Consider the activity as well as the strengths and weaknesses of students).
- Taking into account the various proficiency levels in your classroom, refer to the chart "Differentiated Language Functions and Academic Supports for English Learners" on page 14 when designing lessons.
- Challenge ELs appropriately while making the content comprehensible.



# Tapping in to Prior Knowledge

- Use KWL charts.
- Brainstorm ideas.
- Do Quick Writes on lesson topics.
- Use pictures from text to activate prior knowledge and vocabulary.
- Use pictures from text to have student predict content.
- Have students make their own pictures or make lists about what they already know.
- Language deficiency is not automatically an indicator of the ELs' academic ability. English Learners have rich background knowledge which may remain untapped due to language differences.
- Always review previous day's instruction.
- Integrate new information with old information—refer to previous activities. Ask questions that relate previous learning to the new lesson—"Who remembers?" and "How does this relate to?"
- Design culturally relevant lessons that incorporate students' backgrounds; for example, have students compare a period in history from their countries to a current classroom topic.
- Identify academic vocabulary students must know in order to understand the "Big Idea" of the lesson.
- Show videos/and or pictures before story or lesson to increase comprehension.
- Teach new vocabulary before beginning lesson.

Word Walls (synonyms/antonyms) Games  
Concrete Objects  
Personal Dictionaries  
Act Out  
Technology  
Label Fixed Items  
Gestures—Body Language  
Word Sorts



# Instructional Guidelines

- Be aware of the English proficiency levels of the students in your classroom. Consult the ACCESS test scores, the CAN-DO Descriptors, and your school's ESOL teacher(s).
- Differentiate instruction according to English language proficiency levels. Refer to the WIDA CAN-Do Descriptors.
- While bilingual peer tutoring can be useful to lower anxiety and increase comprehension, use it constructively for academic purposes. Do not overuse.
- Check for comprehension—do not ask “Do you understand?” Ask students to reword or explain.
- Create an atmosphere of acceptance.
- Integrate technology.
- Use teacher and student drawings and labeling of concepts.
- Write homework on the board.
- Point to words when you read them from the board.
- Allow and encourage students to use bilingual dictionaries.
- Involve and encourage ELs to participate in field trips.
- Strategically place ELs in the middle of the classroom, not at the front or back or all in the same group. By placing them in the middle, they can view what other students are doing.
- On ELs' written work, be selective in correcting grammar. In other words, avoid overcorrecting.
- Learn the student's given names. Do not anglicize or shorten a student's name unless requested by the student.
- Involve students actively and physically in learning.
- Involve the EL in simple classroom tasks to promote a feeling of belonging.
- Be aware of software and Internet resources that are available for ELs.
- Note taking is an overwhelming task for many ELs. Allow them to copy a good student's notes or make copies of your own notes.
- Encourage students to share ideas and/or items from their culture that relate to the subject matter being taught.
- Assign a buddy to assist with activities as needed.
- When new ELs enter, explain routines and procedures. (Use native language peers *if* necessary).
- Get to know your students and the proper pronunciation of their names, their backgrounds, customs, families, and educational experiences.
- For K-5, label classroom objects.
- Practice routines at beginning of year to provide an atmosphere of predictability. Comprehension will be enhanced by consistency of the daily activities.
- Students should be given the opportunity to practice lesson activities and vocabulary verbally to promote oral language skills.
- Incorporate ELs along with English speaking students when student grouping takes place.
- Use gestures and references to concrete objects and shared experiences.



# Instructional Strategies

- Use mnemonic devices.
- Teach students to visualize.
- Paraphrase. Find more than one way to say things.
- Activities and tasks should be differentiated according to English proficiency levels.
- Use graphic organizers—story maps, Venn Diagrams, webs, lists, timelines, etc.
- Teach self-questioning/self-monitoring.
- Teach predicting strategies.
- Outline—give students the framework and model the process.
- Highlight key words on handouts, parts of speech with different colors, key words in questions.
- Have students make flashcards.
- Avoid oral correction of language errors; model correct language. Errors may be developmental.
- Use peer tutoring.
- Prompt students to elicit responses.
- Accept any effort to answer questions.
- Use think-alouds.
- Use manipulatives, graphic organizers, study guides, etc.
- Use hands on demonstrations.
- Have students teach what they have learned to other students.
- Implement guided reading.
- Design cloze activities in the content areas.
- Explicitly teach leaning strategies, i.e., how to use a Venn Diagram.
- Ask students to repeat or rephrase instructions.
- Model / demonstrate activities.
- Let students try making their own exercises, test questions, activities, etc.
- Use one-on-one or small group instruction. Make sure ELs are integrated with native speakers.
- Use language frames to help ELs with speaking and writing tasks. For example, “I agree/disagree that \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.” “I would describe \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.” “First \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_\_\_, finally \_\_\_\_\_.”



# Communication in the Classroom

- Place non-speakers with a student who speaks their language when necessary; however, do not isolate them.
- Encourage written interaction through dialog journals.
- Allow students to use software that promotes language development.
- Increase the “wait time” for EL students to respond. (Remember students may be translating from English to native language to English). Build upon student responses in order to expand their language skills and to maintain an academic language focus.
- In groups, give each member a specific duty to ensure maximum participation.
- Teachers should initiate frequent interactions with ELs.
- Some of our ELs come from cultures that are based on cooperation rather than competition. Therefore, these students are used to working together and supporting each other in class activities, homework, and even assessments. Please be conscious that this is not considered cheating in their cultures, and allow time for these students to learn the rules of American classroom expectations.
- Make sure when you are praising children that your verbal communication corresponds with your body language. Use body language to enhance comprehension.
- Be aware of the teacher-student relationships in different cultures. In Hispanic cultures the teachers and students have a very personal relationship like parent and child. The teacher must appeal to the students' emotions. In Asian cultures the relationships are much more formal.
- In certain cultures, students are allowed to express themselves freely and interrupt others including the teacher. These students need to learn the rules of the American classroom.
- Lack of eye contact is a sign of respect in many cultures.
- Be aware/limit the use of idiomatic expressions. Explain where necessary.
- Speak slowly and clearly...not loudly. Speaking loudly does not increase comprehension.
- Use shorter sentences with beginning ELs.
- Use subject-verb order for beginners/newcomers.
- Use active voice not passive voice for beginners/newcomers.
- Paraphrase and repeat information.
- Simplify language but not concept.
- Print key information on the board. Remember many ELs cannot read cursive handwriting.
- Simplify and be consistent with oral and written instructions.
- Encourage students to say, “I don’t understand,” or develop ways for students to let you know when they don’t understand.
- Face the classroom when speaking.



# Evaluation of Concepts & Vocabulary

- Summarize at the end of the day what was taught.
- Provide specific feedback to ELs throughout the lesson; for example, instead of saying, “Good job,” say, “I like the way you used the past tense in that sentence.”
- Design appropriate rubrics for various assignments. (Modify rubrics for ELs as needed).
- Orally spot check comprehension during the lesson.
- Assess students at their English language proficiency levels (refer to the WIDA CAN-Do Descriptors).
- Allow students to demonstrate their knowledge in ways other than paper/pencils tasks.
- Provide study guides to focus on main concepts.
- Allow extra time on tests.
- Read tests aloud to ELs. (Use teaching assistants or parent volunteers if possible).
- Grade the student appropriately for content; not for language or spelling mastery in subjects other than Language Arts.
- Simplify and clarify the language in tests provided by textbook companies.
- Testing formats vary in other countries and ELs may not have been exposed to multiple choice or true/false items on a test. When using the multiple choice format, eliminate one or two choices.
- Essay tests are very difficult for beginning ELs. Students may know the content but due to their lack of language they may be unable to express what they know. In certain cultures students are not taught/allowed to give their opinions, suggest solutions, or predict outcomes. Therefore, be flexible when designing questions for these students.
- In some cultures, students are taught to memorize and reproduce text verbatim in oral and written form.
- Examine test questions to determine if questions are appropriate for students’ language abilities.
- Use word banks for the less proficient students.
- Consider giving ELs a second chance to correct their errors before giving a grade on tests.
- Assessments should match instruction.
- Reduce the number of items given on a test.
- Assessment should be ongoing throughout the unit of instruction.
- Use alternate methods of assessments (portfolios, spot-checking, running records).
- Be aware of cultural bias on tests.
- When assessing students, look beyond written or oral, grammatical or idiomatic problems to underlying thoughts.



# Home-School Partnerships

- Establishing a personal relationship with the parents of ELs may be the single most important factor in fostering student success.
- Communicate school rules and expectations at the beginning and throughout the school year (attendance, discipline, homework, after-school activities).
- Use an interpreter if the parent does not speak English. With advance notification, Fulton County will provide interpreters. Do not rely on the student to translate.
- Parent conferences should be in person since telephone communication is difficult.
- Invite the parents to observe in the classroom even if they are not proficient in English.
- Include parents in classroom activities and field trips.
- Work with PTA to make parents feel comfortable at meetings, festivals, and volunteer opportunities.
- Parents in many cultures only go to school if there is a problem so they need to be encouraged to come to school for school activities, parent conferences, etc.
- Schools should develop workshops that educate parents about the Curriculum Standards.
- Invite parents of ELs into your classroom as cultural resources even if they are not proficient in English.
- Speaking in an unfamiliar language disrupts the communication process between parent and child.
- Children lose their identities if deprived of the native language.
- Obtain a list of adult ESL classes to share with your parents. Many free classes are found in local communities.

# Additional Resources



**Activities for ESL Students**  
<http://a4esl.org>

**WIDA** (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment)  
[www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)

**ASCD** (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development)  
[www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org)

**CAL** (Center for Applied Linguistics)  
[www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)

**CREDE** (Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence)  
[www.cal.org/crede](http://www.cal.org/crede)

**Dave's ESL Café**  
[www.daveseslcafe.com](http://www.daveseslcafe.com)

**ESL Resource Center**  
[www.eslsite.com](http://www.eslsite.com)

**Everything ESL**  
[www.everythingsl.net](http://www.everythingsl.net)

**GATESOL** (Georgia Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages)  
[www.gatesol.org](http://www.gatesol.org)

**TESOL** (Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages)  
[www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)

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