

# The Purpose of English Language Proficiency Standards, Assessments, and Instruction in an Age of New Standards:

## Policy Statement from the Understanding Language Initiative

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The new standards – including Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics as well as Next Generation Science Standards – signal a fundamental upward shift in the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students must develop in order to be college- and career-ready in the 21st century. Nowhere is this shift more obvious than in the sophisticated language competencies students will need. While previous standards were largely silent on the kinds of language competencies students need to perform in academic subject areas, the new standards make them explicit. Consider this descriptive portrait of students meeting the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards:

"Students can, without significant scaffolding, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and they can construct effective arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information. Likewise, students are able independently to discern a speaker's key points, request clarification, and ask relevant questions. They build on others' ideas, articulate their own ideas, and confirm they have been understood" (Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, p. 7).

The new Mathematics Standards place similar importance on students' ability to use language to effectively perform and communicate their understanding:

"Mathematically proficient students understand and use stated assumptions, definitions, and previously established results in constructing arguments. They make conjectures and build a logical progression of statements to explore the truth of their conjectures...They justify their conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to the arguments of others" (Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, p. 6).

Although the development of Next Generation Science Standards is just beginning, the recently published National Research Council framework guiding their development makes clear that students will need to engage in similarly sophisticated uses of language to enact scientific inquiries, explanations, and arguments.

English learners in English-medium classrooms face the dual challenge of learning effective academic uses of a second language while simultaneously learning academic content and skills with and through that language. To ensure these students' linguistic, cognitive, and academic potential is realized, state English language proficiency (ELP) standards must align with and support development of the language capacities found in the new state content standards. While the Understanding Language Initiative does not seek to develop ELP standards, its work has implications for how those standards are framed. Our reading of the new standards finds a view of language proficiency far beyond vocabulary, control of grammatical forms and native-like fluency. The new standards call for high levels of

cognitive engagement, metacognitive skill, and academic discourse within the disciplines. Just as these competencies cannot be developed using a traditional, transmission-model subject matter pedagogy, neither can they be fostered with a language pedagogy that values accuracy and correctness at the expense of meaning-making and communicative performance. Like all students, English learners need opportunities and support to effectively *act with language* in the disciplines.

What are the implications for designing appropriately aligned next-generation ELP standards? Current ELP standards need to be reconceptualized so that they uncover and delineate the linguistic demands embedded within the new standards, including social as well as general and discipline-specific academic language uses. This includes specifying key language functions that students must be able to carry out in discipline-appropriate ways (e.g., obtaining information, demonstrating understanding, constructing explanations, engaging in arguments, etc.). Such target language uses must be expressed in meaningful *progressions* that assist teachers to appropriately scaffold and support students in continually building the capacities needed to develop sophisticated content knowledge, skills and abilities. If done well, these progressions can also guide ELP assessment developers to design appropriate language tasks that operationalize and measure growth of these target language uses. They can also help content assessment developers to better understand and modulate the language demands of academic test items and performance tasks. And they can inform the formative assessment resources that the comprehensive assessment consortia are to provide for teachers of English learners.

What implications does this have for current instructional arrangements? At present, second language development is seen largely as the responsibility of the ESL/ELD teacher, while content development as that of the subject area teacher. Given the new standards' explicitness in how language must be used to enact disciplinary knowledge and skills, such a strict division of labor is no longer viable. Content area teachers must understand and leverage the language and literacy practices found in science, mathematics, history/social studies, and the language arts to enhance students' engagement with rich content and fuel their academic performance. ESL/ELD teachers must cultivate a deeper knowledge of the disciplinary language that ELL students need, and help their students to grow in using it. Far greater collaboration and sharing of expertise are needed among ESL/ELD teachers and content area teachers at the secondary level. At the elementary level, far greater alignment and integration are needed across ESL/ELD and subject matter learning objectives, curriculum, and lesson plans that teachers in self-contained classrooms prepare and deliver.

The systemic implications of these changes are enormous, yet we believe the new standards require us to undertake these efforts if all of our students are to fully realize their potential. As a first step, a small task force (Valdés, Walqui and Kibler) took on the challenge of creating some examples of such standards. They are included here as an appendix.

**APPENDIX:**  
**English Language Proficiency Standards Task Force Report**

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**Task Force Purpose**

1. To inform the development of the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELP Standards) in ways that would be consistent with the work presented at the *Understanding Language* Conference as well as with the weekly deliberations of the Steering Committee on New Standards and ELs over a four-month period.
2. To provide examples of approaches to the development of ELP Standards that:
  - A. Would be consistent with the following general principles proposed by Kenji Hakuta:

| Initial Principles for ELP Standards  |
|---|
| <p>The new standards for ELP must meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• they correspond in a meaningful way to the Common Core State Standards, with “meaningful” being defined in an explicit way that can support systemic attention to ELLs (i.e., supports standards, assessments, materials, teacher preparation, leadership capacity, etc.);</li><li>• they are supported by research and best practice in second language acquisition with respect to: aspects of language that are supportive of the variety of language functions present in schooling, and developmental progressions of language development that depend on the sociolinguistic circumstances of various groups of second language learners;</li><li>• they balance the dualities of the functions and forms of language, with the emphasis being given to those aspects of language that support the language necessary to meet the content standards.</li></ul> |

- B. Would illustrate how one might integrate the legal requirements (listening, speaking, reading, writing) with progressions drawn from discursive activities within the standards;
- C. Would suggest what instruction might do to get students to meet such standards without focusing exclusively or primarily on aspects of grammatical competence (i.e., phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis).

In carrying out its work (which was necessarily compressed into a very tight time-frame), the Task Force examined a variety of existing language proficiency standards and indicators as well as reports on the development of such standards, including:

- *Bandscales for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learners* (2001), *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001), *National Standards in Foreign Language*

*Education Project* (1996), *NLLIA ESL Development: Language and Literacy in Schools* (1994), and *WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards* (2007).

- McKay (1995, 2000), Scott & Erduran (2004), and Rimmer (2006), among others.

## Overview of ELP Standards

We have included in this document a number of examples of English language proficiency indicators that include:

1. Grade Level Specifications either aligned with those of the New Standards (K-5, 6-12) **or** divided into categories such as Early elementary (K-3), Upper elementary (4-5), Middle grades (6-8), and Secondary (9-12)
2. Two broad proficiency levels:
  - Below Threshold (described in this document as “attaining functional proficiency”)<sup>1</sup>
  - Above Threshold (described in this document as “functional proficiency attained”)<sup>2</sup>
3. General descriptive statements at specified levels for listening, speaking, reading and writing
4. Distinctions between developmental progressions in different types of communicative activities<sup>3</sup> embedded in academic settings, for example:
  - interpersonal (one-to-one communication)
    - interpersonal-social (e.g., children communicating on the playground)
    - interpersonal-transactional (e.g., students communicating to complete a school task, to collaborate on an assignment, to ask a teacher for clarification)
  - presentational (one-to-many communication)
    - presentational-productive, oral and written (e.g., classroom participation, oral and written presentations in different content areas)
    - presentational-receptive, oral (e.g., comprehension of teacher explanations, student presentations, films, instructional videos, etc.)
    - presentational-receptive, written (e.g., comprehension of written texts)
5. For each standard at each level, information regarding:
  - General Statement
  - Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance
  - Higher Levels of Performance
  - Notes on Level
  - Teaching Approaches

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<sup>1</sup>Below-Threshold indicators would specify progressions for beginning stages of functional English language development for students new to English.

<sup>2</sup>Above-Threshold indicators would then specify progressions for the discursive activities outlined in the New Standards. Each ELL indicator at this level would be anchored by a CCR standard.

<sup>3</sup>The goal of this approach is to offer a more fine-grained conceptualization of school language than is reflected in the currently used terms “social/oral language” and “academic language.”

## Examples: ELP Standards

The examples provided below are illustrative only. The progressions are drawn from the literature and from our own research. Work on developing indicators and progressions in other settings (e.g., NLLIA Bandscales in Australia) are typically multi-year efforts involving groups of researchers and practitioners.

### **Example 1 (pp. 6-8) Presentational Writing, grades 6-12**

**Key elements:**

- Illustrates the development of writing skills for secondary school children in school-based genres required by the CCS standards.
- Highlights the importance of instruction that apprentices students into writing in academic registers expected in the disciplines without sacrificing a primary emphasis on writing as a meaning-making endeavor.
- Above threshold standards align to 1) CCR Anchor Standards for Language Arts and 2) Standards for Mathematical Practice

### **Example 2 (pp. 9-10) Interpersonal and Presentational Listening, grades K-3**

**Key elements:**

- Illustrates the development of listening skills for young elementary school children and distinguishes between comprehension in on-to-one and one-to-many interactions.
- Emphasizes the importance of ELD instruction that focuses on developing the "comprehension and collaboration" language proficiencies required by the CCS standards.
- Above threshold standards align to CCR Anchor Standards for Language Arts.

### **Example 3 (pp. 11-13) Presentational/Receptive Reading (Informational Text), grades 6-8**

**Key elements:**

- Illustrates how in the middle school years English Language Learners' prior schooling and literacy influences their development of literacy skills in English.
- Highlights the importance of the development of metacognitive skills as well as other types of scaffolding that will provide the "just right" kind of assistance required by specific learners to develop generative literacies and learner autonomy.
- Above threshold standards align to CCR Anchor Standards for Language Arts.

## EXAMPLE 1: PRESENTATIONAL WRITING

*This example illustrates the development of writing skills for secondary school children and emphasizes the varied ways in which students may draw upon their existing L1 and L2 linguistic and cultural resources to create texts. It also highlights the importance of instruction that apprentices students into writing in academic registers expected in the disciplines without sacrificing a primary emphasis on writing as a meaning-making endeavor.*

**Presentational Writing<sup>4</sup>**  
**ESL Bandscale**  
**Below Threshold**  
**Below Threshold (Attaining Functional Proficiency)**  
**Grades 6–12**

| LEVEL 1   | LEVEL 2   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level are beginning to experiment with writing in English in immediate, familiar environments, drawing on knowledge of the world in L1 and English, and on L1 and English language and literacy (to varying degrees).</p>   | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level are increasingly able to write in English in familiar as well as some academic environments, while still drawing on L1 and English background knowledge and literacy (to varying degrees).</p>  |
| <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA &amp; Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can write a limited number of very common words or phrases in isolation or in sentences, often with the help of written documents and reference works. At more advanced stages of level 1, can link sentences together.</li> <li>• Can employ language related to biographical information, everyday objects, daily routines, basic academic concepts, etc.</li> <li>• Can use writing to create a simple description, retell a sequence of events, and express preferences.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA &amp; Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can write connected texts comprised of multiple sentences linked together, usually without reliance on written documents and reference works. Texts show evidence of organization within and between paragraphs.</li> <li>• Can employ language related to personal feelings, experiences, academic concepts, discipline-specific uses of language, current events, etc.</li> <li>• Can use writing to create a description, retell a sequence of events, narrate past events and evaluate their outcomes, express opinions and provide multiple reason(s) for those opinions, evaluate the merits of arguments for or against a certain position, summarize written texts at their reading level, and take notes to capture the main ideas in a grade-level multimedia presentation.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Higher Level Features of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May draw upon L1 knowledge to write in English, depending on L1 literacy background.</li> <li>• May be able to write connected text in home language using some English words and phrases.</li> <li>• May value correctness, collaboration, and creativity in writing differently depending on cultural and educational background.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Higher Level Features of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May draw upon L1 knowledge to write in English, depending on L1 literacy background.</li> <li>• May be able to write primarily in English with occasional words and phrases in home language.</li> <li>• May value correctness, collaboration, and creativity in writing differently depending on cultural and educational background.</li> <li>• May over-rely on source texts and their phrasing of ideas, although some limited paraphrasing occurs.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may be hesitant to begin writing, especially without an oral foundation in what they are writing about.</li> <li>• Students may request repeated help of teacher to ensure correctness of form in writing.</li> <li>• For students with limited exposure to literacy in any language, basic fundamentals of print literacy may be a necessary pre-requisite, including teaching directionality of script, the alphabet, how to use traditional and electronic writing implements, etc.</li> <li>• For secondary students with strong L1 literacy background but limited oral proficiency, writing activities may be more likely to elicit language than oral activities.</li> <li>• Students' writing will demonstrate language patterns that are both specific to their L1 and common to all L2 writers.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may be hesitant to begin writing, especially without sufficient background knowledge of what they are writing about.</li> <li>• Students may request repeated help of teacher to ensure correctness of form in writing.</li> <li>• Students able to write about personal experiences may still encounter significant challenges when writing about discipline-specific or unfamiliar topics.</li> <li>• Students' writing will frequently demonstrate language patterns that are both specific to their L1 and common to all L2 writers.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide rich exposure to words and phrases in appropriate contexts of authentic language use.</li> <li>• Allow students multiple opportunities to hear, see, and speak language they will be writing.</li> <li>• Encourage students to write connected texts without an emphasis on correctness of form, encouraging use of phonetic spellings and reference materials, as needed.</li> <li>• Allow students to use the L1 in oral or written form to facilitate their writing.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide rich exposure to and opportunities to analyze connected model texts in appropriate contexts of authentic language use.</li> <li>• Allow students multiple opportunities to hear, see, and speak language they will be writing.</li> <li>• Encourage students to write connected texts without a primary emphasis on correctness of form, encouraging writing about challenging and meaningful topics.</li> <li>• Allow students to use the L1 in oral or written form to facilitate their writing.</li> <li>• Teach students multiple approaches to idea generation, drafting, revision, and editing, emphasizing the recursive nature of writing and multiple opportunities for focused revision.</li> </ul>  |

<sup>4</sup> This example draws substantially from the NLLIA ESL *Development: Language and Literacy in Schools* (1994) and CEFR descriptors levels A and B.

**Presentational Writing**  
**ESL Bandscale for English/Language Arts**  
**Above Threshold (Functional Proficiency Attained)**  
**Grades 6–12**

| CCR ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR WRITING  | LEVEL 3  | LEVEL 4  |
|---|--|--|
|   | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level are able to write in English in familiar and most academic environments, while still drawing on L1 and English background knowledge and literacy (to varying degrees).</p>   | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level are able to write in English in familiar and academic environments, while still drawing on L1 and English background knowledge and literacy (to varying degrees).</p>  |
| 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.   | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA &amp; Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can introduce general claims in writing, occasionally with specific language.</li> <li>• Can use language to make basic contrasts and comparisons among ideas.</li> <li>• Can draw from background experiences, personal opinions, and some resources at reading level to describe evidence in support of an idea.</li> <li>• Can use formulaic and often repetitive phrases to connect sections of the text and draw the text to a conclusion.</li> <li>• Can anticipate audience knowledge and concerns in writing to a limited degree, depending on background knowledge.</li> <li>• Can use elements of language appropriate to academic registers (formal style), though not consistently.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA &amp; Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can introduce general claims in writing with specific language.</li> <li>• Can use language to make varied contrasts and comparisons among ideas.</li> <li>• Can draw from background experiences, personal opinions, and varied resources at reading level to describe precise evidence in support of an idea.</li> <li>• Can use a range of formulaic phrases to connect sections of the text and draw the text to a conclusion.</li> <li>• Can usually anticipate audience knowledge and concerns in writing, depending on background knowledge.</li> <li>• Can use language appropriate to academic registers (formal style), though occasional slips occur.</li> </ul> |
|   | <p><b>Higher Level Features of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May draw upon L1 knowledge to write in English, depending on L1 literacy background.</li> <li>• May value correctness, collaboration, and creativity in writing differently depending on cultural and educational background.</li> <li>• May over-rely on source texts and their phrasing of ideas, although some paraphrasing occurs.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Higher Level Features of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May draw upon L1 knowledge to write in English, depending on L1 literacy background.</li> <li>• May value correctness, collaboration, and creativity in writing differently depending on cultural and educational background.</li> <li>• May occasionally over-rely on source texts and their phrasing of ideas, but paraphrasing is usually done well.</li> </ul>   |
|   | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may be hesitant to begin writing, especially without sufficient background knowledge of what they are writing about.</li> <li>• Students may encounter significant challenges when writing about discipline-specific or unfamiliar topics.</li> <li>• Students' writing will regularly demonstrate language patterns that are both specific to their L1 and common to all L2 writers.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may encounter challenges when writing about discipline-specific topics if sufficient background knowledge is not present.</li> <li>• Students' writing will still occasionally demonstrate language patterns that are both specific to their L1 and common to all L2 writers.</li> </ul>  |
|   | <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide rich exposure and opportunities to analyze model texts in appropriate contexts of authentic language use.</li> <li>• Allow students multiple opportunities to hear, see, and speak language they will be writing, ensuring they thoroughly comprehend academic topics about which they are writing.</li> <li>• Encourage students to write connected texts without a primary emphasis on correctness of form, encouraging writing about challenging and meaningful topics.</li> <li>• Allow students to use the L1 in oral or written form to facilitate their writing.</li> <li>• Teach students multiple approaches to idea generation, drafting, revision, and editing, emphasizing the recursive nature of writing and multiple opportunities for focused revision.</li> <li>• Provide explicit guidance on the values, assumptions, and intellectual practices underlying the use of written argument in academic settings.</li> <li>• Provide explicit guidance on identifying and using features of academic registers (formal style) appropriate to the discipline, audience, and purpose.</li> <li>• Provide explicit guidance on how to identify and modify language for an imagined audience.</li> <li>• Provide explicit guidance on writing about and rephrasing information gained from other texts to meet teachers' and schools' expectations for citations and avoiding plagiarism.</li> </ul> |  |
| 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection. Organization, and analysis of content. | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA &amp; Language Performance:</b></p>   | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA &amp; Language Performance:</b></p>   |
|   | <p><b>Higher Level Features of Performance:</b></p>  | <p><b>Higher Level Features of Performance:</b></p>  |
|   | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p>   | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p>   |
|   | <p><b>Teaching Approaches:</b></p>   |  |

(FULL SET OF STANDARDS TO INCLUDE ALL 10 ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR WRITING)

**Presentational Writing**  
**ESL Bandscale for Mathematics**  
**Above Threshold (Functional Proficiency Attained)**  
**Grades 6–12**

| STANDARDS FOR MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE                                 | LEVEL 3   | LEVEL 4   |
|---|---|---|
|   | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level are able to write in English in familiar and most academic environments, while still drawing on L1 and English background knowledge and literacy (to varying degrees).</p>  | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level are able to write in English in familiar and academic environments, while still drawing on L1 and English background knowledge and literacy (to varying degrees).</p>   |
| 3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA &amp; Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can construct a mathematical argument in writing, occasionally with specific language.</li> <li>• Can use language to make basic contrasts and comparisons among ideas.</li> <li>• Can draw from background experiences, personal opinions, and some resources at reading level to describe evidence in support of an idea.</li> <li>• Can use elements of language appropriate to mathematic registers, though not consistently.</li> <li>• Can employ visual representations to make argument clear.</li> <li>• Can use formulaic and often repetitive phrases to introduce critiques of others.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA &amp; Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can construct a mathematical argument in writing with specific language.</li> <li>• Can use language to make varied contrasts and comparisons among ideas.</li> <li>• Can draw from background experiences, personal opinions, and varied resources at reading level to describe precise evidence in support of an idea.</li> <li>• Can use language appropriate to mathematic registers, though occasional slips occur.</li> <li>• Can employ visual representations to make argument clear.</li> <li>• Can use a range of formulaic phrases to introduce critiques of others.</li> </ul> |
|   | <p><b>Higher Level Features of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May draw upon L1 knowledge to write in English, depending on L1 literacy background.</li> <li>• May value correctness, collaboration, and creativity in writing differently depending on cultural and previous educational background.</li> <li>• May over-rely on source texts and their phrasing of ideas, although some paraphrasing occurs.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Higher Level Features of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May draw upon L1 knowledge to write in English, depending on L1 literacy background.</li> <li>• May value correctness, collaboration, and creativity in writing differently depending on cultural and previous educational background.</li> <li>• May occasionally over-rely on source texts and their phrasing of ideas, but paraphrasing is usually done well.</li> </ul>   |
|   | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may be hesitant to begin writing, especially without sufficient background knowledge and mathematical understanding of what they are writing about.</li> <li>• Students may encounter significant challenges when writing about discipline-specific or unfamiliar topics.</li> <li>• Students' writing will regularly demonstrate language patterns that are both specific to their L1 and common to all L2 writers.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may encounter challenges when writing about discipline-specific topics if sufficient background knowledge and mathematical understanding are not present.</li> <li>• Students' writing will still occasionally demonstrate language patterns that are both specific to their L1 and common to all L2 writers.</li> </ul>   |
|   | <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide rich exposure and opportunities to analyze model texts in appropriate contexts of authentic language use.</li> <li>• Allow students multiple opportunities to hear, see, and speak language they will be writing, ensuring they thoroughly comprehend the mathematical concepts about which they are writing.</li> <li>• Encourage students to write connected texts without a primary emphasis on correctness of form, focusing on mathematical understanding.</li> <li>• Allow students to use the L1 in oral or written form to facilitate their writing.</li> <li>• Provide explicit guidance on the values, assumptions, and intellectual practices underlying the use of argument and critiquing the ideas of others.</li> <li>• Provide explicit guidance on identifying and using features of mathematical registers.</li> <li>• Provide explicit guidance on writing about and rephrasing information gained from other texts to meet teachers' and schools' expectations for citations and avoiding plagiarism.</li> </ul> |   |

(FULL SET OF STANDARDS TO INCLUDE ALL MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES THAT PERTAIN TO PRESENTATIONAL WRITING.)



## EXAMPLE 2: INTERPERSONAL AND PRESENTATIONAL LISTENING

This example illustrates the development of listening skills for young elementary school children and distinguishes between comprehension in one-to-one and one-to-many interactions. It also illustrates the importance of ELD instruction that focuses on developing the “comprehension and collaboration” language proficiencies required by the CCS standards.

**Interpersonal and Presentational Listening<sup>5</sup>**  
**ESL Bandscale**  
**Below Threshold (Attaining Functional Proficiency)**  
**Grades K–3**

| LEVEL 1   | LEVEL 2   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>General Statement:</b> Children bring to the classroom their experience in communicating with adults and peers in their home language. They draw from their knowledge of pragmatics and invoke social frames to assume communicative intent and meaning in one-to-one interactions with adults. If familiar with school contexts, they build on this experience to guess at the meaning of teacher directions to the whole class.</p>   | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Children grow in their confidence at understanding teacher presentations and interpersonal communication with teachers, English-speaking peers, and other school personnel. They listen with attention and utilize real-world knowledge, familiar lexical phrases, repeated instructions, and peer examples to guess intelligently at meaning.</p>   |
| <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can begin to guess intelligently at meaning in English in both interpersonal (one-to-one) and presentational (teacher to class) communication modes if they are provided with visual supports, repeated classroom routines, and other children’s responses as aides to their developing understanding.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can identify topic and details of most focused presentations that are supported with graphics and gestures and/or include advance organizers.</li> <li>• Can carry out teacher instructions without relying on classmates’ responses.</li> <li>• Can understand peer talk in small group activities but may rely on others to help communicate or expand on his/her contributions.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Higher Levels of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can use familiarity with vocabulary (e.g., names of animals, names of colors, food, brand names) to guess at topic of short focused presentations if provided with an advance organizer.</li> <li>• Can begin to respond to yes/no or multiple-choice questions about objects or situations to which they and an interlocutor are jointly attending.</li> <li>• May begin to respond to yes/no or multiple-choice questions about objects or situations to which they and an interlocutor are NOT jointly attending but which are a logical extension of the topic in question (e.g., Do you have a dog like Zippy, the dog in the story?).</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Higher Levels of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can listen with understanding for longer segments of time.</li> <li>• Continues to use pragmatic knowledge skillfully in order to make predictions about a presentation and to fill in missing information.</li> <li>• May miss some specific details because of lack of language range (depth of vocabulary, inability to follow sudden topic shifts or use of parenthetical asides in a linear presentation).</li> <li>• Begins to listen for more subtle meanings in exchanges with peers during group work including tone and stance.</li> <li>• May begin to identify peer contributions that are off target, incorrect, and not useful for the intended task.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At this level, students will not learn new concepts if taught exclusively through English.</li> <li>• If children are in contexts where interpersonal-social language is modeled for them by other children who are fluent speakers of the language, they will begin to engage in communicative routines of various levels of complexity and comprehend the functional effect of different expressions and respond in ways that signal their understanding.</li> <li>• If children are in classrooms of all ELs with no access to children who can model language interaction, development will progress more slowly. Memorized phrases may be drilled so that they can be repeated and recognized. Access to the functional range of those expressions and possible spontaneous responses to them will not, however, be available to them.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At this level, students can be exposed to new concepts exclusively through English if supported by illustrations, graphic examples, gestures, etc. and if care and attention is given to checking for understanding during and after the presentation.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize that comprehension of teacher explanations and of the language used in the classroom by peers is essential for learning as well as for acquiring English.</li> <li>• Monitor student comprehension to make decisions about the kinds of focused listening opportunities that can be provided as well as possible just-in-time L1 use.</li> <li>• Provide a language-rich environment in which activities are contextualized.</li> <li>• Provide short, focused listening times (with feedback in the L1 or using graphics or illustrations) to build confidence.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for helping students to develop strategies for listening (beyond initial exhaustion) in order to guess intelligently at identifying the topic and one or two details of a focused presentation supported by graphics, illustrations, gestures, etc.</li> <li>• Use games and other oral activities to engage children in comprehension activities.</li> <li>• If in an all EL classroom, arrange for groupings of different levels of students so that advanced beginners might model actual interactions for true beginners.</li> <li>• If possible, arrange for interactions and guided group activities between ELs and functional English speakers in the school.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to recognize that comprehension of teacher explanations and of the language used in the classroom by peers is essential for learning as well as for acquiring English.</li> <li>• Continue to provide a language-rich environment in which activities are contextualized.</li> <li>• Continue to provide opportunities for helping students to develop strategies for listening (beyond initial exhaustion).</li> <li>• Introduce students to strategies that will help them to monitor lapses in comprehension, ways of maintaining concentration, and ways of following quick changes of topic.</li> <li>• Continue to arrange for peer-level interactions between ELs and functional English speakers in the school.</li> <li>• Use CC Standards for Speaking and Listening to prepare students to demonstrate competence in <u>comprehension and collaboration</u> (p. 22), which will require them to develop the ability to participate in a range of conversations and collaboration with diverse partners.</li> </ul> |

<sup>5</sup> This example draws substantially from the *Bandscales for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learners* (2001).

Interpersonal and Presentational Listening  
 ESL Bandscale  
 Above Threshold (Functional Proficiency Attained)  
 Grades K-3

| CCR ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR LISTENING  | LEVEL 3   | LEVEL 4   |
|---|---|---|
|   | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Children comprehend most one-to-one and many-to-one conversations and presentations in English in an expanding range of social, community, and school contexts.</p>  | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Children can comprehend spoken English on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in school. They are able to understand most if not all forms and styles of speech commonly used by teachers and peers in their region of the country. They skillfully use both linguistic processing (e.g., knowledge of vocabulary, familiarity with lexical phrases, internalization of some structures) as well as pragmatic processing (familiarity with notions of deixis, intention, strategic use, and conversational meaning) to contribute to their understanding of new information.</p>  |
| 1. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively and orally.  | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can comprehend main points and details of most academic instruction.</li> <li>• Can understand announcements and messages on general school topics and activities.</li> <li>• Can understand most information presented in instructional films and videos.</li> <li>• Can work in groups with fellow students on assigned tasks and engage in collaborative work by responding to the ideas, opinions, and points of view of classmates.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Skills/Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can understand instructional presentations on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions, on all school subjects.</li> <li>• Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument in face-to-face, one-to-many presentations where.</li> <li>• Can obtain information from diverse media formats.</li> <li>• Can engage in productive discussions and collaborations with peers giving evidence of ability to comprehend both the opinions and contributions of peers as well as the meaning of particular expressive and stylistic choice (lexis, intonation, rhetorical style).</li> </ul> |
| 2. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. | <p><b>Higher Levels of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can identify humor, sarcasm, and other such subtleties in one-on-one and in many-to-one interactions.</li> <li>• Is never distracted or confused by topic shifts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At this level, students can learn through English and understand and begin to evaluate peer speech in most ordinary classroom interactions.</li> <li>• Receptive proficiency may still be superior to productive proficiency.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Higher Levels of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can follow shifts of topics, attend to humorous asides, and identify speakers' intentions.</li> <li>• As appropriate for their age, can fill in "supporting grounds" of an argument and make "bridging inferences."</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students' misunderstandings when they occur may more likely be due to lack of background knowledge and experience with a particular topic or domain than to the linguistic or pragmatic processing of information.</li> </ul>  |
| 3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning and use of evidence and rhetoric.  | <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide exposure to different types of presentations on topics covered in the classroom (video, guest speakers, films).</li> <li>• Provide students with strategies for monitoring their comprehension.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for using learned strategies while listening to various types of presentations.</li> <li>• Provide instruction in note-taking while listening.</li> <li>• Provide information about the organization of presentations (one-to-many speech) that may help students focus on particular segments of presentations.</li> <li>• Provide practice in listening for and evaluating the substance, tone and stance of peer contributions in group activities.</li> </ul> |   |

### EXAMPLE 3: PRESENTATIONAL/RECEPTIVE READING

This example illustrates how in the middle school years English learners' prior schooling and literacy influences their development of literacy skills in English. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of the development of metacognitive skills as well as other types of scaffolding that will provide the "just right" kind of assistance required by specific learners to develop generative literacies and learner autonomy.

**Presentational/Receptive Reading (Informational Text)**  
**ESL Bandscale**  
**Below Threshold (Attaining Functional Proficiency)**  
**Grades 6–8**

| LEVEL 1   | LEVEL 2  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level are beginning to read texts in English drawing on their knowledge of the world, their L1, and literacy skills developed in their L1. Metacognitive processes –practiced in the L1– help them develop their reading competence in English.</p>   | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level are increasingly able to read texts that although building on their prior background focus on universal ideas. Metacognitive processes begin to take place in English through the use of routine expressions. They skim and scan text to get their gist and to obtain specific information.</p>  |
| <p><b>Skills, Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can understand key ideas presented in rich paragraphs that have been selected or constructed to be age-appropriate, high interest/high relevance. Paragraphs present everyday situations in contexts familiar to students.</li> <li>• Can use pictures included in the text to enhance their understanding of key messages.</li> <li>• Can understand paragraphs written in language that is simple and amplified. Paragraphs contain clear markers of text organization and structure.</li> <li>• Can express in the L1 their lack of understanding of the text, although not always precisely.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Skills, Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can understand key ideas in articles about universal themes, or with ideas from other cultures if the text provides contextualization.</li> <li>• Can read longer texts that contain greater variety of language (a few nominalizations, for example). Text includes some visual support.</li> <li>• Can use pictures and other visual elements included in the text to enhance their understanding of key ideas.</li> <li>• Can recognize a few markers of text cohesion and the meaning relationships they introduce in the text.</li> <li>• Can express their lack of understanding of the text with more precision in the L1, and more tentatively in English.</li> <li>• Can skim to get the gist of a text.</li> <li>• Can scan a text in search of specific information.</li> <li>• Can differentiate textual from inferred information.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Higher Levels of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can understand key ideas in rich paragraphs being able to distinguish between key and supportive evidence.</li> <li>• Begin to scan text to get specific information.</li> <li>• Begin to skim text to get the general idea.</li> <li>• Can begin to express their comprehension or lack of it using their developing English at times, and their L1 at others.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Higher Levels of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can read short articles with familiar themes (for example, biographies of culturally well-known people; descriptions of lives similar to those of people in their community or culture). Text contains redundancy and visuals or charts to support student understanding. Sentences are complex, but the embeddings build cognitive abundance. Texts are well organized, with more variety in markers, a few examples of nominalization.</li> <li>• Can monitor and express their understanding and lack of understanding of a text using routine expressions in English.</li> <li>• Can explain the evidence that led them to infer information from a text.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students at this level are beginning to read in English. Use of their L1 to discuss what they understand and what they don't is encouraged.</li> <li>• Can understand that in a text there are more important elements than others, and can identify those elements at times.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students at this level are beginning to gain some confidence in reading simple texts in English. They may bring to the text their own worldview (of content, context, and genre) thus arriving at different interpretations than those intended.</li> <li>• Can understand the importance of using metacognitive skills in their own learning.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide texts that are similar in composition.</li> <li>• Provide intensive work in reading and discussing the structure of paragraphs. Invite students to use their L1 when there are other students in class who share the same language. Model the process of recognizing key ideas and supportive evidence and provide opportunities to practice.</li> <li>• Provide multiple, constant opportunities for students to collaboratively practice listing key textual information presented in rich paragraphs.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Teaching Approaches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities to practice metacognitive skills in the process of learning English, and learning through English.</li> <li>• Provide texts that have been "chunked" into meaningful components and that include questions that help guide students' attention to key elements in text.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for students to discuss text composition and the role of key markers of text structure.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for students to practice discussing explicit and inferential information.</li> </ul>  |

**Presentational/Receptive Reading (Informational Text)**  
**ESL Bandscale**  
**Above Threshold (Functional Proficiency Attained)**  
**Grades 6–8**

| STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT 6–8   | LEVEL 3  | LEVEL 4   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level have sufficient English and reading skills to be able to succeed it in a subject content area class taught by a teacher who knows how to scaffold their development of practices in English Language Arts. These students are at a danger of “plateauing” in their academic skills unless they are challenged and supported to reach higher levels of intellectual engagement with text . They are also likely to drop out of school if they feel that the texts they are asked to read and the tasks they are invited to participate in minimize their potential and treat them as if they were children or not worthy of serious intellectual work.</p>  | <p><b>General Statement:</b> Students at this level can engage in complex academic tasks that involve reading and that are relevant to their age and grade level with appropriate scaffolding. The variety of genres and texts that students can read individually and collaboratively increases. Intellectual challenge and support in reading grade-level appropriate texts is essential, as is the use of well-designed collaboration.</p>   |
| <p>1. Cite textual evidence that supports analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially</p> <p>2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas.</p> <p>4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p> | <p><b>Skills, Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are able to draw on their growing proficiency in English to expect what they are reading within mid-length texts on familiar or unfamiliar topics that include contextual support.</li> <li>• Begin to infer broadly the meaning of unknown terms and phrases based on their understanding of contextual clues and functions in the text.</li> <li>• With scaffolding they can cite textual evidence from a text to support their analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as what it infers.</li> <li>• Can track the development of key ideas in a text with some scaffolding that helps them become increasingly aware of text structure.</li> <li>• Can comprehend and predict meaning from written text, and to ask for help when they don't, specifying where understanding breaks down.</li> <li>• Are aware of most common genres, their purpose, structure and most frequent linguistic features.</li> <li>• Are able to understand texts that follow typical rhetorical patterns in most frequent genres.</li> <li>• Can broadly monitor their own understanding of text and apply relevant strategies when they don't. Use formulaic expressions to mark their metacognitive processes.</li> <li>• Begin to understand –through explicit guidance and practice- the way point of view is expressed.</li> <li>• Begin to assess –with support- arguments taking into consideration whether they are supported by evidence or not.</li> <li>• May still misinterpret text based on different rhetorical patterns displayed by genres in their L1.</li> </ul> <p><b>Higher Levels of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With support and in collaboration can compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with another.</li> <li>• Can analyze texts that follow typical characteristics of a genre.</li> <li>• With scaffolding, determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may be hesitant to read texts on their own. Modeling of thinking aloud processes and practice in self-monitoring of understanding will assist them.</li> <li>• Students reading understanding will at times be influenced by their background knowledge, and knowledge of genres in their L1.</li> <li>• Occasional use of L1 in discussing metalinguistic features of a text</li> </ul> | <p><b>Skills, Strategies, Features of SLA and Language Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can read with ease a wide variety of texts, identifying key ideas and supporting details, drawing inferences, and specifying the warrants that support their inferences.</li> <li>• Can more adeptly infer the meaning of unknown terms and differentiate between those that are essential to understand –given a specific task- and those that are not.</li> <li>• Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</li> <li>• Can track the development of key ideas in a text, and can point to the linguistic elements that mark transitions.</li> <li>• Predict the content of text from a recognition of genre, content, and textual features.</li> <li>• Can understand that some texts do not follow the traditional rhetorical structure associated with genre, but with scaffolding they learn to recognize and value these variations.</li> <li>• Begin to develop a sense for how language is used to create powerful texts, as for example, through a recognition of metaphor and poetic forms of speech.</li> <li>• Can identify point of view in most texts, although they still require scaffolding with some more complex texts.</li> <li>• Can collaboratively compare and contrast different authors' presentation of events and ideas.</li> <li>• Begin to understand when words are used figuratively and connotatively, as well as the impact of word choice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Higher Levels of Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can individually, building on inner resources, compare and contrast diverse authors' presentations of events or ideas.</li> <li>• Can-working in collaboration with others-analyze texts that deviate from the typical rhetorical patterns of a genre.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes on Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While competent at reading individually most common genres of informational text focused on known topics or well-backgrounded new topics, students will still benefit from deliberately structured collaborative work.</li> <li>• They will also –although more infrequently- benefit from brief and targeted use of their L1.</li> </ul> |

**Teaching Approaches**

- Provide rich reading opportunities that combine speaking, listening, and writing in the pursue of deep understandings of reading (as for example through jigsaw projects that focus on diverse aspects of the same theme and require students to read texts on different aspects of a theme, analyzing them, sharing them back with partners who read something else. The jointly constructed information is then used to solve a novel problem.)
- Explicit teaching of metalinguistic and metacognitive skills is combined with their application to the reading and discussion of texts.
- Invite students to be aware of the skills they are applying as they engage in reading for meaning, and to keep track of their own reading understanding and development of English.
- Provide modeling of close reading of text, and gradually invite students to take over close reading in dyads or groups of four.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to read texts with diverse points of view on the same topic, helping them become aware of the language that signals an author's position.
- Invite students to discuss how a text structures the presentation of ideas, the warrants that are brought to support positions, and the language used.
- Provide students with opportunities to compare alternative uses of the same genre, word choice, and tone.
- Use CCSSs for Reading to prepare students to demonstrate competence in reading informational text (p. 36) which will require them to develop the ability to participate in the collaborative and individual reading of various informational genres.