

# TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate

## Educator Guide



**2021–2022**



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# Resources

Online Resource Materials	
General	Located at
Student Assessment Division	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/</a>
<i>District and Campus Coordinator Resources</i>	<a href="http://txetests.com/dccr/">http://txetests.com/dccr/</a>
Accommodation Resources	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/accommodations/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/accommodations/</a>
<i>Interpreting Assessment Reports</i>	<a href="https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/interpreting-assessment-reports">https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/interpreting-assessment-reports</a>
Texas Administrative Code	<a href="http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/">http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/</a>
English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=6148">www.tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=6148</a>
TELPAS	Located at
<i>TELPAS Rater Manual</i>	<a href="https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/telpas/telpas-resources">https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/telpas/telpas-resources</a>
<i>TELPAS Test Administrator Manual</i>	<a href="https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/telpas/telpas-resources">https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/telpas/telpas-resources</a>
Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs)	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/telpas/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/telpas/</a>
Introductory Training on the PLDs	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/telpas/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/telpas/</a>
Listening and Speaking Practice Sets, Reading Practice Sets, Listening and Speaking Released Tests, and Reading Released Tests	<a href="https://txpt.cambiumtds.com/student">https://txpt.cambiumtds.com/student</a>
TELPAS Alternate	Located at
<i>TELPAS Alternate Test Administrator Manual</i>	<a href="https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/telpas/telpas-alternate-resources">https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/telpas/telpas-alternate-resources</a>
TELPAS Alternate PLDs	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/</a>
Observable Behaviors Inventory (notes version)	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/</a>
Training Presentations	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/</a>
Documentation Forms	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/</a>
Blueprints, Proficiency Labels, and Definitions	<a href="http://www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/">www.tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/telpasalt/</a>

# About This Educator Guide

This guide provides information about the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) and TELPAS Alternate assessment programs for English learners (ELs). TELPAS is for ELs in grades K–12, while TELPAS Alternate is for ELs in grades 2–12. Note that when this guide refers to ELs, it applies to students identified as emergent bilingual (EB), per the terminology changes made in the 87th Texas Legislature.

This guide provides an overview of TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate and serves to support effective implementation of the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). The chart below contains a list of commonly used abbreviations for the TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate programs.

## Acronyms

<b>AAC</b>	augmentative and alternative communication
<b>BICS</b>	basic interpersonal communicative skills
<b>CALP</b>	cognitive academic language proficiency
<b>EB</b>	emergent bilingual
<b>EL</b>	English learner
<b>ELP</b>	English language proficiency
<b>ELPS</b>	English Language Proficiency Standards
<b>ESL</b>	English as a second language
<b>ESSA</b>	Every Student Succeeds Act
<b>IEP</b>	individualized education program
<b>LEP</b>	limited English proficient
<b>PEIMS</b>	Public Education Information Management System
<b>PLD</b>	proficiency level descriptor
<b>SE</b>	student expectation
<b>TAC</b>	Texas Administrative Code
<b>TEKS</b>	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
<b>TELPAS</b>	Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System

# TELPAS: General Information

## Introduction

Several sections of this guide provide an overview of TELPAS. To show the integral relationship between TELPAS and the ELPS, this guide includes the ELPS, proficiency level descriptors (PLDs), explanatory information, and sample test questions.

## TELPAS Assessment Components

TELPAS assesses the English language proficiency of ELs in grades K–12 in four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. English language proficiency assessments in grades K–12 are federally required to evaluate the progress that ELs make in becoming proficient in the use of academic English. The assessment components for grades K–1 and grades 2–12 differ in the following ways.

- **Grades K–1:** TELPAS includes holistically rated listening, speaking, reading, and writing assessments based on ongoing classroom observations and student interactions.
- **Grades 2–12:** TELPAS includes online listening and speaking and reading tests and holistically rated student writing collections.

## Alignment with State Curriculum

TELPAS assesses the ELPS, which districts are required to implement as an integral part of each foundation and enrichment subject of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) state-required curriculum.

## ELPS Overview

Approved by the State Board of Education in 2007, the ELPS are second language acquisition curriculum standards that support the ability of ELs to learn the academic English they need for meaningful engagement in subject-area instruction. The ELPS are set forth in Title 19, Chapter 74.4, of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC).

Chapter 74.4 (a)(1) requires the ELPS to be published along with the TEKS for each subject. Every teacher who has an EL in class is responsible for fulfilling the requirements of the subject-area TEKS and the ELPS.

There are three instructional components of the ELPS:

1. **Cross-curricular second language acquisition essential knowledge and skills**  
These standards, which apply across the curriculum, represent what ELs need to learn to become proficient in English in the context of academic instruction. The knowledge and skills are stated as **student expectations (SEs)** and are divided into five sections—**learning strategies, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.**

2. **PLDs**

These descriptors define four stages of second language acquisition called English language proficiency levels. The four proficiency levels are **beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high.** The PLDs describe how well ELs at each proficiency level can understand and use English to engage in grade-appropriate academic instruction. There are separate PLDs for listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

3. **Linguistic accommodations**

Linguistic accommodations are English language supports that help make subject-area instruction accessible to ELs. The PLDs, which describe the English that ELs can understand and use at each proficiency level, guide teachers in providing appropriate linguistic supports and accommodations.

These three instructional components work together to accelerate the rate at which ELs learn English and subject matter.

## **Relationship of ELPS to Subject-Area TEKS**

The ELPS are implemented as part of ongoing subject-area instruction and, as such, are integrally linked with the subject-area TEKS. The ELPS help teachers meet the language and subject-matter needs of ELs simultaneously.

The ELPS do not vary by subject, and, with few exceptions, they are the same from grade to grade. Despite their uniformity, the ELPS fully support and align with the learning of subject-specific and grade-specific English. The ELPS require subject-area teachers to build the English language skills that enable ELs to understand and use grade-appropriate English in class. Using the ELPS, grade 6 mathematics teachers help ELs learn the English used in grade 6 mathematics TEKS instruction. High school biology teachers help ELs learn the English used in high school biology TEKS instruction.

## **ELPS-TELPAS Alignment**

TELPAS assesses English language proficiency in direct alignment with the ELPS. It measures the ELPS student expectations in accordance with the four levels of English language proficiency defined in the PLDs. TELPAS is designed to directly support the state's educational goals for meeting the language and content needs of ELs. Throughout this guide, the integral relationship between the ELPS, subject-area TEKS, and TELPAS is shown.



## Test Development Process

As it does with all Texas assessments, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) involves a wide variety of educators, assessment experts, and administrators in the test development process. During the TELPAS design, field-test review, and standard-setting phases, TEA involved

- bilingual, English as a second language (ESL), and general education teachers,
- bilingual and ESL coordinators,
- district and campus testing coordinators and administrators,
- assessment experts, and
- second language acquisition experts and researchers.

Committees of Texas educators convene annually to review new field-test questions. Teachers and school district administrators provide feedback on the holistically rated assessment components through evaluations of TELPAS rater training, online surveys, and audit questionnaires.

## Test Results

TELPAS score reports include the individual proficiency level ratings of students (beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high) in each of the four language domains assessed (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Composite proficiency ratings are also provided.

Composite proficiency ratings provide a single overall level of English language proficiency derived from the proficiency ratings in the four language domains. The composite rating weights are 25 percent for each language domain.

TELPAS Report Cards are reports that explain TELPAS results to parents. They are produced in English and Spanish and are available for teachers, students, and parents to access in the Texas Assessment portals.

Detailed information about TELPAS score reports is provided on the Centralized Reporting System (CRS).

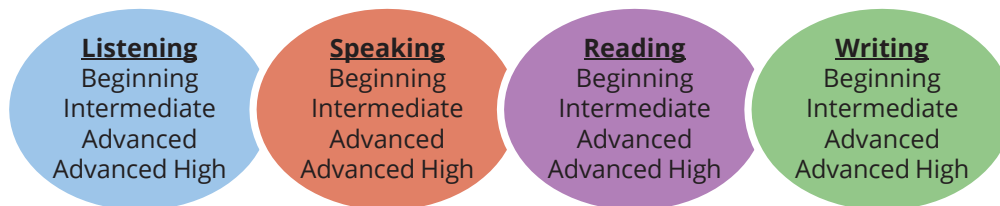
TELPAS results are used in the following ways:

- to help parents monitor the progress their children make in learning English
- to inform instructional planning and program exit decisions for individual students
- to report performance to local school boards, school professionals, and the community
- to evaluate programs, resources, and staffing patterns
- to evaluate districts and campuses in a variety of state and federal accountability measures

# TELPAS: Developing and Assessing English Proficiency

The ELPS and TELPAS are designed to work together to enable ELs to make steady progress in learning the English that is necessary for meaningful engagement in grade-appropriate subject-area instruction. The second language acquisition knowledge and skills in the ELPS are the means for helping ELs learn English simultaneously with academic subject matter. Together, the ELPS and TELPAS provide formative and summative assessment opportunities that support teaching and learning.

Learning a second language is different from learning a first language. Individuals may begin learning a second language at any age and in a variety of different contexts (social, school, or work). Second languages are learned along a continuum that can be divided into stages called *language proficiency levels*. The ELPS identify four language proficiency levels (beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high) for each of the four language domains assessed (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).



English language proficiency assessments report progress from one proficiency level to the next rather than using passing scores, because proceeding from little or no English to full English proficiency takes place over time, not within a school year. ELs in U.S. school systems are a diverse group of students. Some are born in the U.S. and are educated here from the beginning, while others are immigrants who may be in any grade when they arrive in the U.S. ELs differ widely in their educational backgrounds, sociocultural experiences, and knowledge of English upon enrollment. These factors affect how long it takes for them to learn English.

It is difficult to learn and advance academically without the ability to fully understand the language of one's instruction. In bilingual education programs, students receive native language support as they learn English and grade-level academic skills. In ESL programs, students face the challenge of learning rigorous academic subject matter in English, the language they struggle to understand.

## Language Domains

For assessment purposes, the second language acquisition domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are defined as follows:

<b>Listening</b>	the ability to understand spoken language, comprehend and extract information, and follow social and instructional discourse through which information is provided
<b>Speaking</b>	the ability to use spoken language appropriately and effectively in learning activities and social interactions
<b>Reading</b>	the ability to comprehend and interpret written text at the grade-appropriate level
<b>Writing</b>	the ability to produce written text with content and format to fulfill grade-appropriate classroom assignments

The definitions are not tied to academic achievement but to the communication skills that second language learners need in order to use the English language as an effective medium for grade-level academic instruction.

## Cross-Curricular Second Language Acquisition Knowledge and Skills

For each language domain, the ELPS outline what ELs must know and be able to do to become proficient in academic English. The TEKS require teachers of ELs to integrate these student expectations into their subject-area lessons. The student expectations are cross-curricular and divided into five sections—**learning strategies, listening, speaking, reading, and writing**.

A student expectation from each of the five sections is provided in the following chart. The complete sets of student expectations for the four language domains are provided in the corresponding sections of this guide. The student expectations for the learning strategies are found in the appendix.

**Examples of Cross-Curricular Second Language Acquisition  
Student Expectations, 19 TAC 74.4(c)**

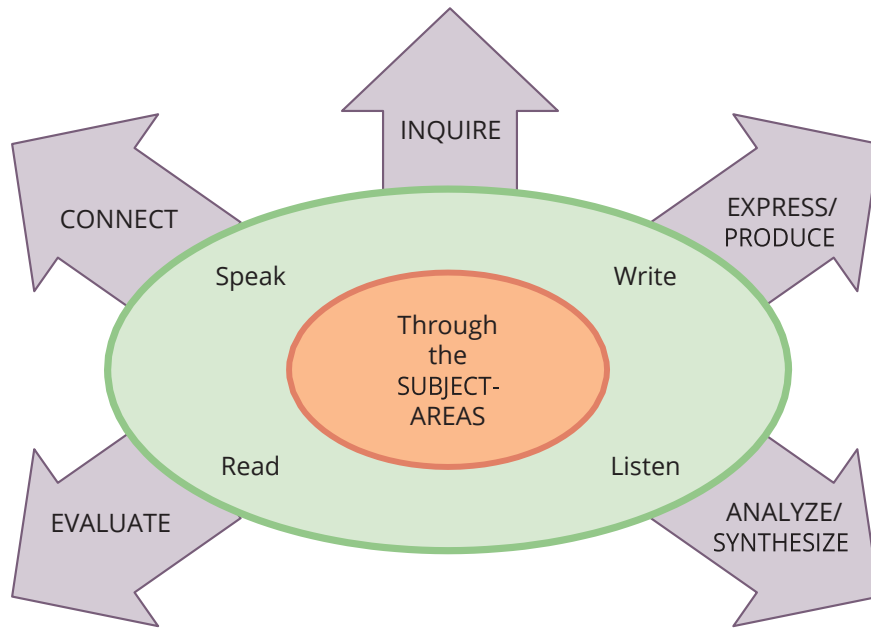
<b>Learning Strategies</b>	(1)(A) use prior knowledge and experiences to understand meanings in English
<b>Listening</b>	(2)(C) learn new language structures, expressions, and basic and academic vocabulary heard during classroom instruction and interactions
<b>Speaking</b>	(3)(H) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired
<b>Reading</b>	(4)(E) read linguistically accommodated content area material with a decreasing need for linguistic accommodations as more English is learned
<b>Writing</b>	(5)(B) write using newly acquired basic vocabulary and content-based grade-level vocabulary

Integrating the ELPS student expectations during subject-area instruction involves giving ELs frequent, targeted practice in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. Effective implementation of the ELPS engages ELs in activities that are appropriately scaffolded to help them learn both the subject matter and English.

ELs need abundant opportunities to practice using new English words and language structures, many of which are already familiar to native English speakers. ELs new to the English language are bombarded with unfamiliar language in classes taught in English. New ELs begin by picking up English that is concrete and supported heavily with pictures and gestures. As learning proceeds, the language that sticks most readily is that which

- builds on known English and familiar topics,
- occurs frequently,
- is presented in interesting and relevant contexts, and
- is used orally and in writing.

Having ongoing, appropriately scaffolded speaking and writing opportunities during subject-area instruction is beneficial for all students but is particularly important for ELs. It gives ELs the opportunity to verbalize, think through, and reinforce what they are learning, in terms of both new subject matter and new English.



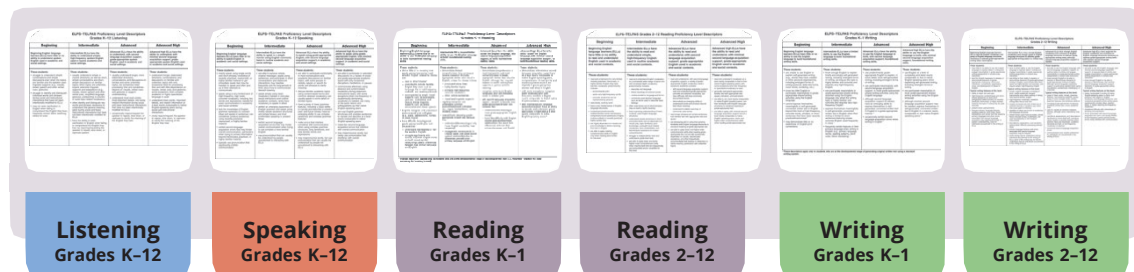
## Proficiency Level Descriptors

The ELPS proficiency level descriptors present the major characteristics of each language proficiency level in each language domain. The PLDs define how well ELs at the four proficiency levels are able to understand and use English in grade-level academic settings. The descriptors show the progression of second language acquisition from one proficiency level to the next and serve as a road map to help teachers tailor instruction to the linguistic needs of ELs.

For ease of use, the PLDs are presented in a chart format rather than the legal format in which they appear in the TAC. For statewide consistency, the PLDs are used in the format shown below.

ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors Grades K–12 Listening				
Proficiency Level	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced	Advanced High
Summary Statement	Beginning English language learners (ELLs) have little or no ability to understand spoken English used in academic and social settings.	Intermediate ELLs have the ability to understand simple, high-frequency spoken English used in routine academic and social settings.	Advanced ELLs have the ability to understand, with second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate spoken English used in academic and social settings.	Advanced high ELLs have the ability to understand with minimal second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate spoken English used in academic and social settings.
Descriptors	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>struggle to understand simple conversations and simple discussions even when the topics are familiar and the speaker uses linguistic supports (e.g., visuals, slower speech and other verbal cues, gestures)</li> <li>struggle to identify and distinguish individual words and phrases during social and instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li>may not seek clarification in English when failing to comprehend the English they hear; frequently remain silent, watching others for cues</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>usually understand simple or routine directions, as well as short, simple conversations and short, simple discussions on familiar topics; when topics are unfamiliar, require extensive linguistic supports and adaptations (e.g., visuals, slower speech and other verbal cues, simplified language, gestures, preteaching to preview or build topic-related vocabulary)</li> <li>often identify and distinguish key words and phrases necessary to understand the general meaning (gist) during social and basic instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li>have the ability to seek clarification in English when failing to comprehend the English they hear by requiring/requesting the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase speech</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>usually understand longer, more elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and some unfamiliar topics, but sometimes need processing time and sometimes depend on visuals, verbal cues, and gestures to support understanding</li> <li>understand most main points, most important details, and some implicit information during social and basic instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li>occasionally require/request the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase to clarify the meaning of the English they hear</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand longer, elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and unfamiliar topics with only occasional need for processing time and with little dependence on visuals, verbal cues, and gestures; some exceptions when complex academic or highly specialized language is used</li> <li>understand main points, important details, and implicit information at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers during social and instructional interactions</li> <li>rarely require/request the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase to clarify the meaning of the English they hear</li> </ul>

There is one set of PLDs for listening and one set for speaking. There are two sets for reading and two sets for writing to address different grade bands. The separate sets of grades K-1 PLDs address emergent literacy. The PLD charts are included in the corresponding sections of this guide.



While the PLDs are language-domain specific, the global definitions and key features of each proficiency level remain constant across language domains. Understanding the global definitions and features provides the foundation for learning the characteristics that are specific to each language domain.

Global Definitions of the Proficiency Levels	Key Features
<p><b>Beginning</b></p> <p>Beginning students have little or no ability to understand and use English. They may know a little English but not enough to function meaningfully in social or academic settings.</p>	<p><b>Beginning</b></p> <p>little or no English ability</p>
<p><b>Intermediate</b></p> <p>Intermediate students have some ability to understand and use English. They can function in social and academic settings as long as the tasks require them to understand and use simple language structures and high-frequency vocabulary in routine contexts.</p>	<p><b>Intermediate</b></p> <p>limited ability, simple language structures, high-frequency vocabulary, routine contexts</p>
<p><b>Advanced</b></p> <p>Advanced students are able to engage in grade-appropriate academic instruction in English, although ongoing second language acquisition support is needed to help them understand and use grade-appropriate language. These students function beyond the level of simple, routinely used English.</p>	<p><b>Advanced</b></p> <p>ability to engage in grade-appropriate academic instruction with second language acquisition support</p>
<p><b>Advanced High</b></p> <p>Advanced high students have attained the command of English that enables them, with minimal second language acquisition support, to engage in regular, all-English academic instruction at their grade level.</p>	<p><b>Advanced High</b></p> <p>ability to engage in grade-appropriate academic instruction with minimal second language acquisition support</p>

# Advanced High English Language Proficiency Versus High Academic Achievement

Note that high academic achievement is not mentioned in the definition of the advanced high level of English language proficiency. High academic achievement is not a prerequisite of English language proficiency. Advanced high ELs exhibit a range of academic achievement just as native English speakers do.

High academic achievement is the goal of all schooling and is demonstrated through subject-area assessments. Advanced high English language proficiency supports the ability of ELs to achieve academically but is not sufficient to guarantee it. An EL with an advanced high level of English language proficiency who is not achieving academically needs interventions related to the subject matter taught, not second language acquisition.

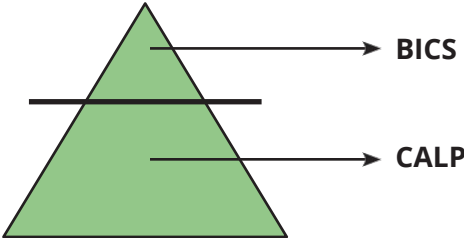
## Fundamentals of Second Language Acquisition

### Two Types of Second Language Acquisition

Two types of second language acquisition are important for success in school. Students must be able to understand and use the English of everyday social and routine classroom interactions, as well as the English needed for accessing and negotiating learning, processing cognitively demanding information, and building conceptual understanding. The terms **basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS)** and **cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)** were introduced in the 1980s by researcher and professor, Jim Cummins, to describe these types of language proficiency.

<b>BICS</b>	everyday language needed for daily social and routine classroom interactions
<b>CALP</b>	language students need in order to think critically, understand and learn new concepts, cognitively process complex academic material, and interact and communicate in academic contexts

Cummins used an iceberg model to explain that BICS are often easy to observe (as is the part of the iceberg above the water), while CALP (the submerged part) has more depth, takes longer to acquire, and may require probing in order to be observed and evaluated.



The table below provides examples of BICS and CALP by language domain.

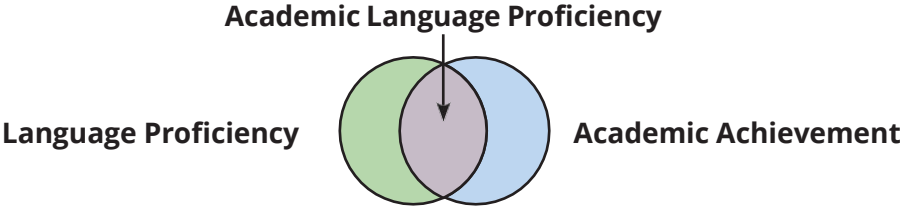
<b>Domains</b>	<b>Examples of BICS</b>	<b>Examples of CALP</b>
Listening and Speaking	highly routine classroom interactions; interacting informally with friends and classmates	participating in class discussions to build and demonstrate conceptual understanding; listening to presentations or educational multimedia; understanding language used in cognitively demanding explanations; presenting information to others
Reading and Writing Grades K-1	reading environmental print; making a short note (for students who have learned to read and write)	learning to read; listening to and interpreting stories read aloud; reading stories; learning to write; participating in shared writing activities; reading and writing to complete class assignments; writing stories
Reading and Writing Grades 2-12	reading a note from a friend; composing or reading casual letters, emails, and text messages; reading bulletin boards, announcements, blogs, and other basic environmental print; making to-do lists	reading a book or article to gain information; reading literature; writing an essay, explanation, or story; building conceptual knowledge through reading classroom materials

## **Academic Language Proficiency Versus Academic Achievement**

Academic language proficiency is not the same as academic achievement, but it is an essential enabling component of academic achievement. ELs who have academic language proficiency understand the English that makes the learning of academic concepts and skills fully accessible. Academic language proficiency, therefore, provides the foundation for and access to academic achievement. Language proficiency encompasses both social language proficiency (BICS) and academic language proficiency (CALP).



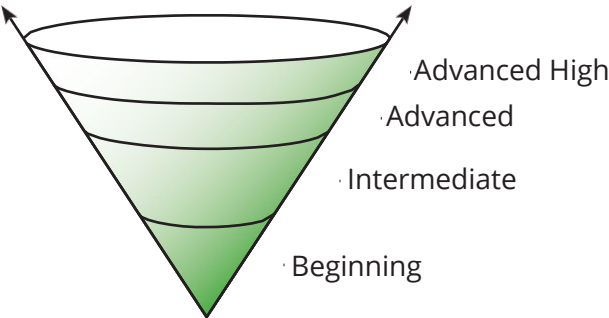
The graphic below helps show the relationship between **language proficiency** as a whole, **academic achievement** as a whole, and the overlapping section—**academic language proficiency**.



Social Language Proficiency	Academic Language Proficiency	Academic Achievement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language of social interaction</li> <li>• language acquisition often outside of school</li> <li>• tied to everyday life</li> <li>• grounded in language proficiency standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language of content-based instruction</li> <li>• language acquisition mainly within school</li> <li>• tied to school life</li> <li>• grounded in language proficiency standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concepts of subject-based instruction</li> <li>• conceptual development</li> <li>• tied to curriculum in specific subject-areas</li> <li>• grounded in academic subject standards</li> </ul>

**Building Language Proficiency**

The cone-shaped model below depicts the cumulative, spiraling, building nature of second language learning. The body of language skills associated with a given stage of proficiency is prerequisite to the broader range of skills at the next stage. The arrows indicate that language continues to develop beyond the advanced high level. This level is not intended to equal the English language proficiency of a student whose first language is English. Over time, advanced high ELs understand finer nuances of English meaning, use more natural phrasing, and learn low-frequency words, idioms, sayings, etc., that are typically familiar to individuals whose first language is English.



Individuals progress through the proficiency levels at different rates depending on factors such as age, language facility, and instructional variables. Such factors may cause some

students to progress more quickly in certain domains than others. In addition, students may move through certain levels more quickly or slowly than other levels. Without appropriate instruction, for example, some learners may plateau at the intermediate or advanced level. These students need targeted linguistic support to attain the level of English they need to make the learning of academic concepts easier.

Each proficiency level encompasses a range of growth and has an early, middle, and late stage. Students in the late stages of a level demonstrate language that peaks into the next level. Students in the early stages of a new level occasionally demonstrate language that spikes down to the previous level. Students progress to a new level when they perform **most consistently** at that level.

## ELPS in Instruction and Ongoing Formative Assessment

The ELPS call for teachers to use the PLDs to monitor the proficiency levels of their students and provide linguistically accommodated instruction commensurate with students' proficiency level needs. All instruction provided to ELs, whether it is second language acquisition instruction guided by the ELPS student expectations or subject-area instruction guided by the TEKS, is to be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) in accordance with the student's level of English language proficiency.

Teachers are responsible for using the ELPS student expectations and the PLDs to

- monitor the English language proficiency of ELs,
- help the students progress to higher English language proficiency levels, and
- make learning accessible through linguistically accommodated instruction.

Using the PLDs, teachers tune in to how well their ELs understand and use English

- when academic material is presented,
- when they engage in cooperative learning activities, and
- when they interact informally with others.

The ongoing use of the PLDs to assess and promote student progress is an example of formative assessment.

## Role of the PLDs in Linguistically Accommodated Instruction

The PLDs play an important role in linguistically accommodated instruction. The PLDs describe the degree to which students at each of the four proficiency levels need linguistic supports and accommodations to engage meaningfully in grade-level instruction. The PLDs are, thus, a key resource to use in determining the kinds of linguistic accommodations to provide. As students progress from one proficiency level to the next, they gain more and more facility with English and need fewer and fewer linguistic accommodations.

Teachers who internalize the meaning of the PLDs understand what a student can currently comprehend and communicate in English as well as what communication skills are associated with the next proficiency level. This knowledge helps teachers adjust subject-area instruction to make it comprehensible in accordance with the student's current proficiency level. Teachers can also better sequence and scaffold instruction to help the student acquire the English abilities of the next proficiency level. Using the PLDs as a formative assessment tool leads to linguistically accommodated instruction that helps students get from point A to point B in both subject matter instruction and in learning English.

## Design of TELPAS Holistically Rated Assessments

A holistically rated assessment process is used for the following grades and language domains of TELPAS.

- Grades K–1: listening, speaking, reading, writing
- Grades 2–12: writing

In alignment with the ELPS, these assessments measure the ability of each EL to understand and use English to engage in grade-appropriate subject-area TEKS instruction. The assessments are conducted by teachers and are based on the performance of students in daily instruction.

### Spring Summative Assessment

TELPAS assesses the English language proficiency of ELs as a summative spring assessment. Districts assign raters to conduct the assessment. While a given student has only one official rater, the rater may collaborate with others to ensure rating accuracy.

The PLDs in the ELPS are the same as those used for TELPAS. TELPAS raters complete in-depth, online training shortly before the spring assessment to prepare to use the PLDs as rubrics to rate the English proficiency of ELs in a consistent and accurate manner statewide.

The training that TELPAS raters receive supports the administration of TELPAS and provides teachers with ongoing professional development to support effective implementation of the ELPS. Detailed information about the TELPAS rater training process can be accessed on the [TELPAS Resources](#) webpage.

### Setting and Maintaining Performance Standards

The standardization of a large-scale assessment is established by setting performance standards and maintaining them from one administration of the assessment to the next. The performance standards for the holistically rated components of TELPAS are the PLDs.

The standards are maintained through the online training of raters. The training includes authentic student exemplars and rating feedback to provide raters with the guidance, practice, and calibration they need for the statewide assessment. Schools implement rating

verification processes during the assessment, and TEA conducts periodic audits to provide evidence of the validity and reliability of the test results.

## **Design of TELPAS Online Assessments**

The TELPAS listening, speaking, and reading components for students in grades 2–12 are administered online. TELPAS online tests are designed to measure English language listening, speaking, and reading proficiency in alignment with the beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high PLDs for each domain. A multiple-choice testing approach is used for the reading assessment. Listening and speaking are tested together on one assessment that includes a variety of question types. Listening test questions include passage-based and non-passage-based questions, picture-based questions, and drag-and-drop questions, among others. The speaking test questions include a variety of picture-, passage-, and text-based speaking prompts. The variety of question types gives ELs the opportunity to show their comprehension and communication skills in various ways.

In addition, the listening and reading selections and test questions are written to measure the proficiency levels defined by the PLDs. In alignment with the PLDs, the degree to which the material is linguistically accommodated diminishes as the proficiency level assessed increases. Test material measuring the beginning and intermediate proficiency levels assesses the student's listening and reading comprehension of basic English and routine academic language. Test material measuring the advanced and advanced high levels increases in linguistic and cognitive complexity in order to assess the student's listening and reading comprehension of the type of English typically used in grade-level instructional texts.

## **Spring Summative Assessments**

Teachers incorporate the ELPS student expectations for listening, speaking, and reading during instruction and use the PLDs formatively throughout the year. During the spring assessment window, students take the TELPAS listening and speaking and the TELPAS reading test online.

## **Setting and Maintaining Performance Standards**

Standard setting for the TELPAS listening and speaking test and the TELPAS reading test was conducted to support the ability of the tests to measure and report performance in alignment with the PLDs, such that the proficiency levels reported coincide with the proficiency levels of the students, as defined by the PLDs. The standard-setting process determines how well students must perform on the test to be classified into each proficiency level category. The performance standards are maintained across school years through a test equating process.

# TELPAS, Grades K-1

As described in the previous section, for kindergarten and grade 1 TELPAS assessments, all four domains are performance-based and holistically rated by teachers of the students. TELPAS assessments are administered in the spring, but educators who are trained as TELPAS raters become adept at using the holistic assessment process in formative ways throughout the year to identify and respond to the needs of their ELs.

As a part of ongoing routine instruction in the spring, TELPAS raters engage ELs in performance-based activities and use the PLDs to determine a student's proficiency level for each domain. The summary statement and descriptors for each proficiency level in the PLDs form a student profile. When rating students, educators can review the proficiency levels as a whole and determine the level that best describes the student's current overall proficiency in English for the relevant domain. For a student in early or late stages of a proficiency level, raters are directed to determine the level at which the student performs most consistently.

## TELPAS Listening, Grades K-1

English language proficiency in listening is defined for TELPAS as the ability to understand spoken language, comprehend and extract information, and follow social and instructional discourse. ELs who are English-proficient in the domain of listening understand spoken English well enough to participate meaningfully and with minimal second language acquisition support in grade-level academic instruction.

### Performance-Based Listening Activities

The following types of performance-based activities are recommended to teachers as ways to gather information about the listening proficiency of students. This list of activities is not exhaustive.

#### **Grades K-1 Performance-Based Listening Activities**

- reacting to oral presentations
- responding to text read aloud
- following directions
- cooperative group work
- informal interactions with peers
- large-group and small-group instructional interactions
- one-on-one interviews
- individual student conferences

## ELPS Student Expectations and PLDs

These are the nine student expectations for listening that apply to grades K–12:

### **ELPS Student Expectations for Listening, 19 TAC 74.4(c)(2)**

**(2) Cross-curricular second language acquisition/listening. The ELL listens to a variety of speakers including teachers, peers, and electronic media to gain an increasing level of comprehension of newly acquired language in all content areas. ELLs may be at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition in listening. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student’s level of English language proficiency. The student is expected to:**

- (A) distinguish sounds and intonation patterns of English with increasing ease;
- (B) recognize elements of the English sound system in newly acquired vocabulary such as long and short vowels, silent letters, and consonant clusters;
- (C) learn new language structures, expressions, and basic and academic vocabulary heard during classroom instruction and interactions;
- (D) monitor understanding of spoken language during classroom instruction and interactions and seek clarification as needed;
- (E) use visual, contextual, and linguistic support to enhance and confirm understanding of increasingly complex and elaborated spoken language;
- (F) listen to and derive meaning from a variety of media such as audio tape, video, DVD, and CD ROM to build and reinforce concept and language attainment;
- (G) understand the general meaning, main points, and important details of spoken language ranging from situations in which topics, language, and contexts are familiar to unfamiliar;
- (H) understand implicit ideas and information in increasingly complex spoken language commensurate with grade-level learning expectations; and
- (I) demonstrate listening comprehension of increasingly complex spoken English by following directions, retelling or summarizing spoken messages, responding to questions and requests, collaborating with peers, and taking notes commensurate with content and grade-level needs.

**ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors, 19 TAC 74.4(d)(1)  
Grades K–12 Listening**

BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
<p><b>(A) Beginning ELLs have little or no ability to understand spoken English used in academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(B) Intermediate ELLs have the ability to understand simple, high-frequency spoken English used in routine academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(C) Advanced ELLs have the ability to understand, with second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate spoken English used in academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(D) Advanced high ELLs have the ability to understand, with minimal second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate spoken English used in academic and social settings.</b></p>
<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> struggle to understand simple conversations and simple discussions even when the topics are familiar and the speaker uses linguistic supports such as visuals, slower speech and other verbal cues, and gestures</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> struggle to identify and distinguish individual words and phrases during social and instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> may not seek clarification in English when failing to comprehend the English they hear; frequently remain silent, watching others for cues</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> usually understand simple or routine directions, as well as short, simple conversations and short, simple discussions on familiar topics; when topics are unfamiliar, require extensive linguistic supports and adaptations such as visuals, slower speech and other verbal cues, simplified language, gestures, and preteaching to preview or build topic-related vocabulary</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> often identify and distinguish key words and phrases necessary to understand the general meaning during social and basic instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> have the ability to seek clarification in English when failing to comprehend the English they hear by requiring/ requesting the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase speech</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> usually understand longer, more elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and some unfamiliar topics, but sometimes need processing time and sometimes depend on visuals, verbal cues, and gestures to support understanding</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> understand most main points, most important details, and some implicit information during social and basic instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> occasionally require/request the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase to clarify the meaning of the English they hear</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> understand longer, elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and unfamiliar topics with occasional need for processing time and with little dependence on visuals, verbal cues, and gestures; some exceptions when complex academic or highly specialized language is used</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> understand main points, important details, and implicit information at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers during social and instructional interactions</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> rarely require/request the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase to clarify the meaning of the English they hear</li> </ul>

As shown in the PLDs, the descriptors in each column define the summary statements. The progression of second language acquisition can be seen by reading the descriptors across the columns, from the beginning to the advanced high level.

<b>1st descriptor</b>	type of spoken English understood and how much the understanding is dependent on supports and linguistic adaptations
<b>2nd descriptor</b>	degree of comprehension demonstrated when interactions are not modified to include supports and linguistic adaptations
<b>3rd descriptor</b>	degree of need to seek clarification to understand or confirm meaning of spoken English

## Instruction and Assessment

The following examples show the direct alignment between TELPAS and the ELPS. The first two examples include a link to a video clip of a student applying listening skills during an activity from the [Grades K-1 Performance-Based Listening Activities](#) list. These types of activities help teachers stay attuned to students' listening proficiency in ongoing instruction and for the spring TELPAS administration.

### Listening Example 1: Following Directions, Grade 1



**CLICK HERE** to see a teacher asking a student at the intermediate level of English language listening proficiency to use manipulatives to create a pattern. In the clip, the teacher observes the student's responses and linguistically accommodates her instruction by modeling, using simple language, and repeating key vocabulary. When the student appears to misunderstand the teacher's request that he describe the pattern he has created, she provides repeated cues to clarify her message based on the EL's proficiency level.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

One-on-one interactions enable teachers to monitor the listening comprehension of ELs for both formative and summative assessment purposes. For students at lower proficiency levels, modeling, visuals, gestures, and accommodated speech can be used to tailor the listening task to the proficiency levels of the students to keep them engaged and monitor their growth over time. These kinds of interactions help ELs develop not only listening comprehension skills in English but speaking skills as well.



## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment

The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed in this example are shown below.

ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT	
Student Expectations 19 TAC §74.4(c)(2)	Proficiency Level Descriptors 19 TAC§74.4 (d)(1)
<p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(A) distinguish sounds and intonation patterns of English with increasing ease</li><li>(B) recognize elements of the English sound system in newly acquired vocabulary such as long and short vowels, silent letters, and consonant clusters</li><li>(C) learn new language structures, expressions, and basic and academic vocabulary heard during classroom instruction and interactions</li><li>(D) monitor understanding of spoken language during classroom instruction and interactions and seek clarification as needed</li><li>(E) use visual, contextual, and linguistic support to enhance and confirm understanding of increasingly complex and elaborated spoken language</li><li>(G) understand the general meaning, main points, and important details of spoken language ranging from situations in which topics, language, and contexts are familiar to unfamiliar</li><li>(I) demonstrate listening comprehension of increasingly complex spoken English by following directions and responding to questions and requests commensurate with content and grade-level needs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(B) Intermediate ELLs have the ability to understand simple, high-frequency spoken English used in routine academic and social settings. These students:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) usually understand simple or routine directions, as well as short, simple conversations and short, simple discussions on familiar topics; when topics are unfamiliar, require extensive linguistic supports and adaptations such as visuals, slower speech and other verbal cues, simplified language, gestures, and preteaching to preview or build topic-related vocabulary</li></ul></li></ul>

Some student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.

### Listening Example 2: Large-Group Instructional Interaction, Grade 1



**CLICK HERE** to see a teacher ask a student at the advanced high level of listening proficiency to identify a particular feature in the morning message. In this clip, the teacher does not modify or accommodate her speech, although she does repeat her instructions. The student appears to understand the teacher’s instructions to locate a lowercase “w” in the morning message. He confirms his understanding by looking at the alphabet poster and asking a clarifying question.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

By asking the EL to follow a minimally accommodated set of instructions in a large-group setting, the teacher is able to monitor the EL’s level of listening comprehension of academic language, as well as his or her understanding of subject-area material. In doing so, the teacher addresses the EL’s subject-area and language needs simultaneously. It is important for teachers to consciously build the academic language proficiency of ELs at higher English

language proficiency levels while monitoring the extent to which they may still need some linguistic accommodation and scaffolding. This helps the ELs meet grade-level learning expectations across the curriculum.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment


The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed in this example are shown below.


ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT	
<b>Student Expectations</b> <b>19 TAC §74.4(c)(2)</b>	<b>Proficiency Level Descriptors</b> <b>19 TAC§74.4 (d)(1)</b>
<p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <p><b>(A)</b> distinguish sounds and intonation patterns of English with increasing ease</p> <p><b>(B)</b> recognize elements of the English sound system in newly acquired vocabulary such as long and short vowels, silent letters, and consonant clusters</p> <p><b>(C)</b> learn new language structures, expressions, and basic and academic vocabulary heard during classroom instruction and interactions</p> <p><b>(D)</b> monitor understanding of spoken language during classroom instruction and interactions and seek clarification as needed</p> <p><b>(E)</b> use visual, contextual, and linguistic support to enhance and confirm understanding of increasingly complex and elaborated spoken language</p> <p><b>(G)</b> understand the general meaning, main points, and important details of spoken language ranging from situations in which topics, language, and contexts are familiar to unfamiliar</p> <p><b>(I)</b> demonstrate listening comprehension of increasingly complex spoken English by following directions and responding to questions and requests commensurate with content and grade-level needs</p>	<p><b>(D)</b> Advanced high ELLs have the ability to understand, with minimal second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate spoken English used in academic and social settings. These students:</p> <p><b>(i)</b> understand longer, elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and unfamiliar topics with occasional need for processing time and with little dependence on visuals, verbal cues, and gestures; some exceptions when complex academic or highly specialized language is used</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> understand main points, important details, and implicit information at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers during social and instructional interactions</p> <p><b>(iii)</b> rarely require/request the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase to clarify the meaning of the English they hear</p>


Some student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.

### Listening Example 3: Rating a Student’s English Language Proficiency, Grade 1

Example 3 includes teacher observations of a student’s listening proficiency and several video clips of the student. The clips are provided to illustrate how teachers use the PLDs and holistically rate the proficiency of their grades K–1 ELs. A link to the student’s proficiency level rating, including the key features of the proficiency level descriptors exhibited, is also provided.

During academic interactions, Min Hee sometimes seems to understand the discussions because she nods her head and smiles and doesn't ask me for clarification. I have to ask probing questions to get a sense of whether she truly comprehends. A similar experience happened yesterday when I conferenced with her about her journal writing, as shown in  [video clip 1](#).

On the playground, I observe Min Hee struggling to interact with her English-speaking friends. Her friends have to use gestures and simple language to help Min Hee participate in games. I also notice that when I talk to her about a familiar topic, such as her family, I have to speak slowly and use other linguistic supports in order for her to understand at least some of the conversation. Last week I asked her about her family's vacation plans, as shown in  [video clip 2](#).

During science, Min Hee has difficulty understanding verbal directions for group activities. She frequently watches other students for cues or asks for clarification from classmates that speak her native language. Min Hee also struggles to understand whole-class math instruction. Even when a classroom volunteer or I interact with her individually and provide substantial second language acquisition support, she is often unable to understand key words and concepts that I'm teaching, as shown in  [video clip 3](#).

[CLICK HERE](#) to see Min Hee's listening proficiency level rating.

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**Reminder:** Teachers do not use video recordings during the actual administration of TELPAS. They use the knowledge of the student's English language proficiency level obtained through daily classroom observations and interactions. Video clips are used during TELPAS rater training to calibrate teachers to use the PLDs consistently and accurately for the spring assessment.

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## TELPAS Speaking, Grades K-1

English language proficiency in speaking is defined for TELPAS as the ability to use spoken English appropriately and effectively in learning activities and social interactions. This definition relates specifically to the communication skills that an EL needs to use English as an effective medium for academic instruction.

### Performance-Based Speaking Activities

The following types of performance-based activities are recommended to teachers as ways to gather information about the speaking proficiency of ELs. This list of activities is not exhaustive.

### **Grades K-1 Performance-Based Speaking Activities**

- cooperative group work
- oral presentations
- informal interactions with peers
- large-group and small-group instructional interactions
- one-on-one interviews
- classroom discussions
- articulation of problem-solving strategies
- individual student conferences

## ELPS Student Expectations and PLDs

These are the 10 student expectations for speaking that apply to grades K–12:

### ELPS Student Expectations for Speaking K–12, 19 TAC 74.4(c)(3)

- (3) **Cross-curricular second language acquisition/speaking. The ELL speaks in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes with an awareness of different language registers (formal/informal) using vocabulary with increasing fluency and accuracy in language arts and all content areas. ELLs may be at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition in speaking. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student’s level of English language proficiency. The student is expected to:**
- (A) practice producing sounds of newly acquired vocabulary such as long and short vowels, silent letters, and consonant clusters to pronounce English words in a manner that is increasingly comprehensible;
  - (B) expand and internalize initial English vocabulary by learning and using high-frequency English words necessary for identifying and describing people, places, and objects, by retelling simple stories and basic information represented or supported by pictures, and by learning and using routine language needed for classroom communication;
  - (C) speak using a variety of grammatical structures, sentence lengths, sentence types, and connecting words with increasing accuracy and ease as more English is acquired;
  - (D) speak using grade-level content area vocabulary in context to internalize new English words and build academic language proficiency;
  - (E) share information in cooperative learning interactions;
  - (F) ask and give information ranging from using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts, to using abstract and content-based vocabulary during extended speaking assignments;
  - (G) express opinions, ideas, and feelings ranging from communicating single words and short phrases to participating in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics;
  - (H) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired;
  - (I) adapt spoken language appropriately for formal and informal purposes; and
  - (J) respond orally to information presented in a wide variety of print, electronic, audio, and visual media to build and reinforce concept and language attainment.

## ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors, 19 TAC 74.4(d)(2) Grades K–1 Speaking

BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
<p><b>(A) Beginning ELLs have little or no ability to speak English in academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(B) Intermediate ELLs have the ability to speak in a simple manner using English commonly heard in routine academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(C) Advanced ELLs have the ability to speak using grade-appropriate English, with second language acquisition support, in academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(D) Advanced high ELLs have the ability to speak using grade-appropriate English, with minimal second language acquisition support, in academic and social settings.</b></p>
<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> mainly speak using single words and short phrases consisting of recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar material to get immediate needs met; may be hesitant to speak and often give up in their attempts to communicate</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> speak using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> lack the knowledge of English grammar necessary to connect ideas and speak in sentences; can sometimes produce sentences using recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar material</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> exhibit second language acquisition errors that may hinder overall communication, particularly when trying to convey information beyond memorized, practiced, or highly familiar material</li> <li><b>(v)</b> typically use pronunciation that significantly inhibits communication</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to express simple, original messages, speak using sentences, and participate in short conversations and classroom interactions; may hesitate frequently and for long periods to think about how to communicate desired meaning</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> speak simply using basic vocabulary needed in everyday social interactions and routine academic contexts; rarely have vocabulary to speak in detail</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> exhibit an emerging awareness of English grammar and speak using mostly simple sentence structures and simple tenses; are most comfortable speaking in present tense</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> exhibit second language acquisition errors that may hinder overall communication when trying to use complex or less familiar English</li> <li><b>(v)</b> use pronunciation that can usually be understood by people accustomed to interacting with ELLs</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to participate comfortably in most conversations and academic discussions on familiar topics, with some pauses to restate, repeat, or search for words and phrases to clarify meaning</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> discuss familiar academic topics using content-based terms and common abstract vocabulary; can usually speak in some detail on familiar topics</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> have a grasp of basic grammar features, including a basic ability to narrate and describe in present, past, and future tenses; have an emerging ability to use complex sentences and complex grammar features</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> make errors that interfere somewhat with communication when using complex grammar structures, long sentences, and less familiar words and expressions</li> <li><b>(v)</b> may mispronounce words, but use pronunciation that can usually be understood by people not accustomed to interacting with ELLs</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to participate in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics with only occasional disruptions, hesitations, or pauses</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> communicate effectively using abstract and content-based vocabulary during classroom instructional tasks, with some exceptions when low-frequency or academically demanding vocabulary is needed; use many of the same idioms and colloquialisms as their native English-speaking peers</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> can use English grammar structures and complex sentences to narrate and describe at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> make few second language acquisition errors that interfere with overall communication</li> <li><b>(v)</b> may mispronounce words, but rarely use pronunciation that interferes with overall communication</li> </ul>

As shown in the PLDs, the descriptors for the speaking PLDs address the following elements.

<b>1st descriptor</b>	Discourse type and length; fluency
<b>2nd descriptor</b>	Vocabulary
<b>3rd descriptor</b>	Grammar structures
<b>4th descriptor</b>	Accuracy
<b>5th descriptor</b>	Pronunciation

## Instruction and Assessment

The following examples show the direct alignment between TELPAS and the ELPS. The first two examples include links to video clips of a student engaged in an activity from the [Grades K-1 Performance-Based Speaking Activities](#) list. These types of activities help teachers stay attuned to students’ speaking proficiency in ongoing instruction and for the spring TELPAS administration.

### Speaking Example 1: Classroom Discussion, Kindergarten



**CLICK HERE** to see an EL at the advanced level of speaking proficiency participate in a group discussion about a book the class has been reading. The clip starts as the teacher asks the student to explain why one of the characters from the book feels a certain way.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

Classroom discussions give ELs the opportunity to practice and internalize new vocabulary and language structures in ways that help them progress from one proficiency level to the next in a nonthreatening, engaging group setting. For example, even though this EL is at the advanced level of speaking proficiency, she benefits from hearing some key vocabulary supplied by a classmate and from the opportunity to use that language to elaborate on her response. Such activities also help teachers monitor ELs’ current proficiency levels and better understand how to tailor and keep subject matter instruction comprehensible and accessible as ELs progress.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment

The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed in this example are shown in the chart below.

ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT	
Student Expectations 19 TAC §74.4(c)(3)	Proficiency Level Descriptors 19 TAC §74.4(d)(2)
<p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <p><b>(A)</b> practice producing sounds of newly acquired vocabulary to pronounce English words in a manner that is increasingly comprehensible</p> <p><b>(B)</b> expand and internalize initial English vocabulary by learning and using high-frequency English words and using routine language needed for classroom communication</p> <p><b>(C)</b> speak using a variety of grammatical structures, sentence lengths, sentence types, and connecting words with increasing accuracy and ease as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(D)</b> speak using grade-level content area vocabulary in context</p> <p><b>(E)</b> share information in cooperative learning interactions</p> <p><b>(F)</b> give information ranging from using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts, to using abstract and content-based vocabulary during extended speaking assignments</p> <p><b>(G)</b> express opinions, ideas, and feelings ranging from communicating single words and short phrases to participating in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics</p> <p><b>(H)</b> narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(I)</b> adapt spoken language appropriately for formal and informal purposes</p> <p><b>(J)</b> respond orally to information presented in a wide variety of print, electronic, audio, and visual media</p>	<p><b>(B)</b> Advanced ELLs have the ability to speak using grade-appropriate English, with second-language acquisition support, in academic and social settings. These students:</p> <p><b>(i)</b> are able to participate comfortably in most conversations and academic discussions on familiar topics, with some pauses to restate, repeat, or search for words and phrases to clarify meaning</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> discuss familiar academic topics using content-based terms and common abstract vocabulary; can usually speak in some detail on familiar topics</p> <p><b>(iii)</b> have a grasp of basic grammar features, including a basic ability to narrate and describe in present, past, and future tenses; have an emerging ability to use complex sentences and complex grammar features</p> <p><b>(iv)</b> make errors that interfere somewhat with communication when using complex grammar structures, long sentences, and less familiar words and expressions</p> <p><b>(v)</b> may mispronounce words, but use pronunciation that can usually be understood by people not accustomed to interacting with ELLs</p>

Some student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.

### Speaking Example 2: One-on-One Interview, Grade 1



**CLICK HERE** to see an EL at the advanced high level of speaking proficiency describe a fishing trip. In this clip, the student narrates in some detail about the event, including what his dad and brother did.



## Benefit to Teaching and Learning

One-on-one interactions give teachers the opportunity to monitor and assess the EL's subject-area English language proficiency level in social and academic contexts. In these interactions, ELs can practice using and internalizing new vocabulary and language structures, while teachers can model and reinforce correct use of English. For example, in this clip the teacher offers a vocabulary correction, while also prompting the student to continue his narrative. Engaging students in conversations calling for everyday English helps teachers understand ELs' language needs related to the basic English that non-EL grade-level peers already know. It also helps teachers ensure ELs' foundational basic language proficiency.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment


The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed in this example are shown in the chart below.


ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT	
<b>Student Expectations</b> <b>19 TAC §74.4(c)(3)</b>	<b>Proficiency Level Descriptors</b> <b>19 TAC §74.4(d)(2)</b>
<p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <p><b>(A)</b> practice producing sounds of newly acquired vocabulary to pronounce English words in a manner that is increasingly comprehensible</p> <p><b>(B)</b> expand and internalize initial English vocabulary by learning and using high-frequency English words and using routine language needed for classroom communication</p> <p><b>(C)</b> speak using a variety of grammatical structures, sentence lengths, sentence types, and connecting words with increasing accuracy and ease as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(E)</b> share information in cooperative learning interactions</p> <p><b>(F)</b> give information ranging from using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts, to using abstract and content-based vocabulary during extended speaking assignments</p> <p><b>(G)</b> express opinions, ideas, and feelings ranging from communicating single words and short phrases to participating in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics</p> <p><b>(H)</b> narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(I)</b> adapt spoken language appropriately for formal and informal purposes</p>	<p><b>(D)</b> Advanced high ELLs have the ability to speak using grade-appropriate English, with minimal second language acquisition support, in academic and social settings. These students:</p> <p><b>(i)</b> are able to participate in extended discussion on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics with only occasional disruptions, hesitations, or pauses</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> communicate effectively using abstract and content-based vocabulary during classroom and instructions tasks, with some exceptions when low-frequency or academically demanding vocabulary is needed; use many of the same idioms and colloquialisms as their native English-speaking peers</p> <p><b>(iii)</b> can use English grammar structures and complex sentences to narrate and describe at a level nearly comparably to native English-speaking peers</p> <p><b>(iv)</b> make few second language acquisition errors that interfere with overall communication</p> <p><b>(v)</b> may mispronounce words, but rarely use pronunciation that interferes with overall communication</p>


Some student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.


## Speaking Example 3: Rating a Student’s English Language Proficiency, Grade 1


Example 3 includes teacher observations of a student’s speaking proficiency and several video clips of the student. The clips are provided to illustrate how teachers use the PLDs and holistically rate the speaking proficiency of their grades K-1 ELs. A link to the student’s proficiency level rating, including the key features of the proficiency level descriptors exhibited, is also provided.

Joaquim is able to verbally express simple, original messages in English. However, he makes some pronunciation errors, and his speech is characterized by frequent and sometimes long pauses. He spoke in simple sentences and made some second language acquisition errors when he described a picture of a truck, as shown in  [video clip 1](#).

Earlier this week students talked about what they did for spring break. Joaquim told me about his experience at Sea World with his family. He demonstrated the ability to use concrete, high-frequency vocabulary, with pauses, to speak simply about the experience, as shown in  [video clip 2](#).

In a small-group science discussion, Joaquim expressed himself using basic academic vocabulary in short phrases to explain when birds sleep and then to talk about birds in Brazil. Joaquim’s pronunciation of English sometimes affected his ability to communicate effectively, as shown in  [video clip 3](#).

During a health lesson on safety, Joaquim explained some features of the drawing he was making. Even though he is familiar with auto racing, he had difficulty speaking in detail about his picture. Joaquim communicated using basic vocabulary and made second language acquisition errors when he tried to use less familiar words and grammar, as shown in  [video clip 4](#).

Last week a group of students talked together at the end of the day while they waited for the bus. Joaquim joined in their conversation about things they like to do after school. Joaquim talked about skateboarding, as shown in  [video clip 5](#).

[CLICK HERE](#) to see Joaquim’s speaking proficiency level rating.

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**Reminder:** Teachers do not use video recordings during the actual administration of TELPAS. They use the knowledge of the student’s English language proficiency level obtained through daily classroom observations and interactions. Video clips are used during TELPAS rater training to calibrate teachers to use the PLDs consistently and accurately for the spring assessment.

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## TELPAS Reading, Grades K-1

English language proficiency in reading is defined for TELPAS as the ability to comprehend and interpret written text at the grade-appropriate level.

Students in kindergarten and grade 1 (ELs and non-ELs) vary in how quickly they learn to decode written text. ELs in grades K-1 may be at different developmental stages of emerging literacy regardless of their stage of second language acquisition. As is customary in grades K-1 instruction, students build foundational reading skills through texts read aloud as well as through activities that support their emerging ability to read written texts.

Throughout the year, teachers monitor and develop the reading proficiency levels of their grades K-1 ELs during ongoing classroom instruction as they incorporate the ELPS and subject-area TEKS in daily instruction.

### Performance-Based Reading Activities

The following types of performance-based activities are recommended to teachers as ways to gather information about the English language proficiency of grades K-1 ELs in the domain of reading. This list of activities is not exhaustive.

#### Grades K-1 Performance-Based Reading Activities

- paired reading
- sing-alongs and read-alongs, including chants and poems
- shared reading with big books, charts, overhead transparencies, and other displays
- guided reading with leveled readers
- reading subject-area texts and related materials
- independent reading
- cooperative group work
- reading-response journals

### ELPS Student Expectations and PLDs

These are the 11 student expectations for reading that apply to grades K-12:

## **ELPS Student Expectations for Reading K-1, 19 TAC 74.4(c)(4)**

**(4) Cross-curricular second language acquisition/reading. The ELL reads a variety of texts for a variety of purposes with an increasing level of comprehension in all content areas. ELLs may be at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition in reading. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student's level of English language proficiency. For Kindergarten and Grade 1, certain of these student expectations apply to text read aloud for students not yet at the stage of decoding written text. The student is expected to:**

- (A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language and decode (sound out) words using a combination of skills such as recognizing sound-letter relationships and identifying cognates, affixes, roots, and base words;
- (B) recognize directionality of English reading such as left to right and top to bottom;
- (C) develop basic sight vocabulary, derive meaning of environmental print, and comprehend English vocabulary and language structures used routinely in written classroom materials;
- (D) use prereading supports such as graphic organizers, illustrations, and pretaught topic-related vocabulary and other prereading activities to enhance comprehension of written text;
- (E) read linguistically accommodated content area material with a decreasing need for linguistic accommodations as more English is learned;
- (F) use visual and contextual support and support from peers and teachers to read grade-appropriate content area text, enhance and confirm understanding, and develop vocabulary, grasp of language structures, and background knowledge needed to comprehend increasingly challenging language;
- (G) demonstrate comprehension of increasingly complex English by participating in shared reading, retelling or summarizing material, responding to questions, and taking notes commensurate with content area and grade level needs;
- (H) read silently with increasing ease and comprehension for longer periods;
- (I) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing basic reading skills such as demonstrating understanding of supporting ideas and details in text and graphic sources, summarizing text, and distinguishing main ideas from details commensurate with content area needs;
- (J) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing inferential skills such as predicting, making connections between ideas, drawing inferences and conclusions from text and graphic sources, and finding supporting text evidence commensurate with content area needs; and
- (K) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing analytical skills such as evaluating written information and performing critical analyses commensurate with content area and grade-level needs.

## ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors, 19 TAC 74.4(d)(3) Grades K–1 Reading

BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
<p><b>(A) Beginning ELLs have little or no ability to use the English language to build foundational reading skills.</b></p>	<p><b>(B) Intermediate ELLs have a limited ability to use the English language to build foundational reading skills.</b></p>	<p><b>(C) Advanced ELLs have the ability to use the English language, with second language acquisition support, to build foundational reading skills.</b></p>	<p><b>(D) Advanced high ELLs have the ability to use the English language, with minimal second language acquisition support, to build foundational reading skills.</b></p>
<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> derive little or no meaning from grade-appropriate stories read aloud in English, unless the stories are               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> read in short “chunks”</li> <li><b>(II)</b> controlled to include the little English they know such as language that is high frequency, concrete, and recently practiced</li> <li><b>(III)</b> accompanied by ample visual supports such as illustrations, gestures, pantomime, and objects and by linguistic supports such as careful enunciation and slower speech</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>(ii)</b> begin to recognize and understand environmental print in English such as signs, labeled items, names of peers, and logos</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> have difficulty decoding most grade-appropriate English text because they *               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> understand the meaning of very few words in English</li> <li><b>(II)</b> struggle significantly with sounds in spoken English words and with sound-symbol relationships due to differences between their primary language and English</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> demonstrate limited comprehension (key words and general meaning) of grade-appropriate stories read aloud in English, unless the stories include               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> predictable story lines</li> <li><b>(II)</b> highly familiar topics</li> <li><b>(III)</b> primarily high-frequency, concrete vocabulary</li> <li><b>(IV)</b> short, simple sentences</li> <li><b>(V)</b> visual and linguistic supports</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>(ii)</b> regularly recognize and understand common environmental print in English such as signs, labeled items, names of peers, and logos</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> have difficulty decoding grade-appropriate English text because they *               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> understand the meaning of only those English words they hear frequently</li> <li><b>(II)</b> struggle with some sounds in English words and some sound-symbol relationships due to differences between their primary language and English</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> demonstrate comprehension of most main points and most supporting ideas in grade-appropriate stories read aloud in English, although they may still depend on visual and linguistic supports to gain or confirm meaning</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> recognize some basic English vocabulary and high-frequency words in isolated print</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> with second language acquisition support, are able to decode most grade-appropriate English text because they *               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> understand the meaning of most grade-appropriate English words</li> <li><b>(II)</b> have little difficulty with English sounds and sound-symbol relationships that result from differences between their primary language and English</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> demonstrate, with minimal second language acquisition support and at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers, comprehension of main points and supporting ideas (explicit and implicit) in grade-appropriate stories read aloud in English</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> with some exceptions, recognize sight vocabulary and high-frequency words to a degree nearly comparable to that of native English-speaking peers</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> with minimal second language acquisition support, have an ability to decode and understand grade-appropriate English text at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers *</li> </ul>

**\*The last descriptor applies only to students who are at the developmental stage of decoding written text (i.e., they have “cracked the code” necessary for learning to read).**

As shown in the PLDs, the reading PLDs for grades K–1 differ from those for grades 2–12 because they take into account that grades K–1 students develop the ability to decode written text at different rates regardless of their stage of second language acquisition. The PLDs contain descriptors related to the ability to understand English read aloud as well as the ability to decode and understand written English. For students not yet at the emergent literacy stage of decoding written text, the descriptors related to understanding written English are not used.

The descriptors address the following elements and show the progression of reading proficiency from the beginning to the advanced high level.

<b>1st descriptor</b>	Comprehension of stories read aloud (oral reading)
<b>2nd descriptor</b>	Recognizing/understanding simple environmental print, high-frequency words, sight vocabulary
<b>3rd descriptor</b>	Decoding grade-appropriate English text

## Instruction and Assessment

The following examples show the direct alignment between TELPAS and the ELPS. The first two examples include links to video clips of a student engaged in an activity from the [Grades K–1 Performance-Based Reading Activities](#) list. These types of activities help teachers stay attuned to students’ English language reading proficiency in ongoing instruction and for the spring TELPAS administration.

### Reading Example 1: Shared Reading with Big Books, Grade 1



**CLICK HERE** to see a teacher who has just finished reading a story aloud. The story was about a gift that a young girl made for a family member by gathering her favorite things and putting them in a basket. The story line was neither highly familiar nor predictable, but the book does have illustrations to support understanding. In the clip, the teacher linguistically accommodates her instruction by tailoring questions about the story to the English language proficiency level of an intermediate EL.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

Shared reading activities enable teachers to monitor the reading comprehension of ELs for both formative and summative assessment purposes. For students at lower proficiency levels, story visuals can be used to enhance comprehension, and teachers can tailor questions to the proficiency levels of the students to keep them engaged in the activity and monitor their growth over time. These kinds of activities help ELs develop not only reading comprehension skills in English but listening and speaking skills as well.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment

In this activity, the teacher addresses several ELPS student expectations and gathers information aligned to PLDs that describe how well students comprehend stories read aloud in English.

ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT	
Student Expectations 19 TAC §74.4(c)(4)	Proficiency Level Descriptors 19 TAC §74.4(d)(3)
<p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <p><b>(F)</b> use visual and contextual support and support from teachers to read grade-appropriate content area text, enhance and confirm understanding, and develop vocabulary and grasp of language structures to comprehend increasingly challenging language</p> <p><b>(G)</b> demonstrate comprehension of increasingly complex English by participating in shared reading, retelling or summarizing material and responding to questions commensurate with content area and grade level needs</p> <p><b>(I)</b> demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing basic reading skills such as demonstrating understanding of supporting ideas and details in text and graphic sources commensurate with content area needs</p>	<p><b>(B)</b> Intermediate ELLs have a limited ability to use the English language to build foundational reading skills. These students:</p> <p><b>(i)</b> demonstrate limited comprehension (key words and general meaning) of grade-appropriate stories read aloud in English, unless the stories include</p> <p><b>(I)</b> predictable story lines</p> <p><b>(II)</b> highly familiar topics</p> <p><b>(III)</b> primarily high-frequency, concrete vocabulary</p> <p><b>(IV)</b> short, simple sentences</p> <p><b>(V)</b> visual and linguistic supports</p>

Some student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.

### Reading Example 2: Reading-Response Journal, Grade 1



**CLICK HERE** to see a student at the advanced level of English language reading proficiency using what she wrote in her journal to retell *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. The story features a predictable story line and concrete vocabulary that can be supported through illustrations. This student is able to decode written text.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

Students use reading-response journals to communicate their thoughts about books they have read. The responses provide a means for monitoring their developing reading ability. Students not yet at the developmental stage of decoding written text can respond to stories read aloud by drawing pictures to show understanding. The interactions between the teacher and student also give the student opportunities to practice and internalize new English vocabulary and language structures that are necessary prerequisites for developing grade-level reading skills in English.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment

The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed in this example are shown on the following page.

ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT	
Student Expectations 19 TAC §74.4(c)(4)	Proficiency Level Descriptors 19 TAC §74.4(d)(3)
<p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <p><b>(A)</b> learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language and decode (sound out) words</p> <p><b>(B)</b> recognize directionality of English reading such as left to right and top to bottom</p> <p><b>(C)</b> comprehend English vocabulary and language structures used routinely in written classroom materials</p> <p><b>(F)</b> use visual and contextual support and support from teachers to read grade-appropriate content area text, enhance and confirm understanding, and develop vocabulary and grasp of language structures to comprehend increasingly challenging language</p> <p><b>(G)</b> demonstrate comprehension of increasingly complex English by participating in shared reading, retelling or summarizing material and responding to questions commensurate with content area and grade level needs</p> <p><b>(I)</b> demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing basic reading skills such as demonstrating understanding of supporting ideas and details in text and graphic sources commensurate with content area needs</p>	<p><b>(C)</b> Advanced ELLs have the ability to use the English language, with second language acquisition support, to build foundational reading skills. These students:</p> <p><b>(i)</b> demonstrate comprehension of most main points and most supporting ideas in grade-appropriate stories read aloud in English, although they may still depend on visual and linguistic supports to gain or confirm meaning</p> <p><b>(iii)</b> with second language acquisition support, are able to decode most grade-appropriate English text because they</p> <p><b>(I)</b> understand the meaning of most grade-appropriate English words</p> <p><b>(II)</b> have little difficulty with English sounds and sound-symbol relationships that result from differences between their primary language and English</p>


Some student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.


### Reading Example 3: Rating a Student’s English Language Proficiency, Grade 1


Example 3 includes teacher observations of a student’s reading proficiency and several video clips of the student. The clips are provided to illustrate how teachers use the PLDs to holistically rate the reading proficiency of their grades K–1 ELs. A link to the student’s proficiency level rating, including the key features of the proficiency level descriptors exhibited, is also provided.



Seung enjoys listening to me read books aloud to the class. Without relying on visuals much, he's able to retell the main events and answer comprehension questions.

Seung needs little second language acquisition support when he reads books in his reading group. Recently, we read a book about an owl. He successfully read without assistance, as shown in  [video clip 1](#).

Later during that reading group, Seung showed he understood the story by answering comprehension questions correctly, as shown in  [video clip 2](#).

Seung is able to decode words in books and on the word wall at a level similar to his native English-speaking classmates. Last week, he successfully read from a grade-level book, as shown in  [video clip 3](#).

[CLICK HERE](#) to see Seung's reading proficiency level rating.

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**Reminder:** Teachers do not use video recordings during the actual administration of TELPAS. They use the knowledge of the student's English language proficiency level obtained through daily classroom observations and interactions. Video clips are used during TELPAS rater training to calibrate teachers to use the PLDs consistently and accurately for the spring assessment.

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## TELPAS Writing, Grades K-1

English language proficiency in writing is defined for TELPAS as the ability to produce written text with content and format to fulfill grade-appropriate classroom assignments.

Students in kindergarten and grade 1 (ELs and non-ELs) vary in how quickly they learn to write. Grades K-1 ELs may be at different developmental stages of learning to write regardless of their English language proficiency. As is customary in grades K-1 instruction, students build foundational writing skills through applicable oral prerequisite activities, activities based on emergent forms of writing, and activities that involve self-generated connected written text.

Throughout the year, teachers monitor and develop the English language writing proficiency levels of their grades K-1 ELs as they incorporate the ELPS and subject-area TEKS in daily instruction. The TELPAS writing assessments for kindergarten and grade 1 are performance-based and holistically rated by teachers of the students.

## Performance-Based Writing Activities

The following types of performance-based activities are recommended as ways to gather information about the English language proficiency of grades K–1 ELs in the domain of writing. This list of activities is not exhaustive.

### Grades K–1 Performance-Based Writing Activities

- journal writing for personal reflections
- shared writing for literacy and subject-area development
- language experience dictation
- organization of thoughts and ideas through prewriting strategies
- publishing and presenting
- making lists for specific purposes
- labeling pictures, objects, and items from projects
- cooperative group work
- first drafts

## ELPS Student Expectations and PLDs

Certain student expectations for grades K–1 students do not apply until the student has reached the stage of generating original written text using a standard writing system.

### ELPS Student Expectations for Writing K–1, 19 TAC 74.4(c)(5)

- (5) **Cross-curricular second language acquisition/writing.** The ELL writes in a variety of forms with increasing accuracy to effectively address a specific purpose and audience in all subject-areas. ELLs may be at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition in writing. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student’s level of English language proficiency. For Kindergarten and Grade 1, certain of these student expectations do not apply until the student has reached the stage of generating original written text using a standard writing system. The student is expected to:

- (A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing in English;
- (B) write using newly acquired basic vocabulary and content-based grade-level vocabulary;
- (C) spell familiar English words with increasing accuracy, and employ English spelling patterns and rules with increasing accuracy as more English is acquired;
- (D) edit writing for standard grammar and usage, including subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and appropriate verb tenses commensurate with grade-level expectations as more English is acquired;
- (E) employ increasingly complex grammatical structures in subject-area writing commensurate with grade-level expectations, such as:
  - (i) using correct verbs, tenses, and pronouns/antecedents;
  - (ii) using possessive case (apostrophe **s**) correctly; and
  - (iii) using negatives and contractions correctly.
- (F) write using a variety of grade-appropriate sentence lengths, patterns, and connecting words to combine phrases, clauses, and sentences in increasingly accurate ways as more English is acquired; and
- (G) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail to fulfill subject-area writing needs as more English is acquired.

## ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors, 19 TAC 74.4(d)(5) Grades K–1 Writing

BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
<p><b>(A) Beginning ELLs have little or no ability to use the English language to build foundational writing skills.</b></p>	<p><b>(B) Intermediate ELLs have a limited ability to use the English language to build foundational writing skills.</b></p>	<p><b>(C) Advanced ELLs have the ability to use the English language to build, with second language acquisition support, foundational writing skills.</b></p>	<p><b>(D) Advanced high ELLs have the ability to use the English language to build, with minimal second language acquisition support, foundational writing skills.</b></p>
<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are unable to use English to explain self-generated writing such as stories they have created or other personal expressions, including emergent forms of writing (pictures, letter-like forms, mock words, scribbling, etc.)</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> know too little English to participate meaningfully in grade-appropriate shared writing activities using the English language</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> cannot express themselves meaningfully in self-generated, connected written text in English beyond the level of high-frequency, concrete words, phrases, or short sentences that have been recently practiced and/or memorized *</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> may demonstrate little or no awareness of English print conventions</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> know enough English to explain briefly and simply self-generated writing, including emergent forms of writing, as long as the topic is highly familiar and concrete and requires very high-frequency English</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> can participate meaningfully in grade-appropriate shared writing activities using the English language only when the writing topic is highly familiar and concrete and requires very high-frequency English</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> express themselves meaningfully in self-generated, connected written text in English when their writing is limited to short sentences featuring simple, concrete English used frequently in class *</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> frequently exhibit features of their primary language when writing in English such as primary language words, spelling patterns, word order, and literal translating *</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> use predominantly grade-appropriate English to explain, in some detail, most self-generated writing, including emergent forms of writing</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> can participate meaningfully, with second language acquisition support, in most grade-appropriate shared writing activities using the English language</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> although second language acquisition support is needed, have an emerging ability to express themselves in self-generated, connected written text in English in a grade-appropriate manner *</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> occasionally exhibit second language acquisition errors when writing in English *</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> use English at a level of complexity and detail nearly comparable to that of native English-speaking peers when explaining self-generated writing, including emergent forms of writing</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> can participate meaningfully in most grade-appropriate shared writing activities using the English language</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> although minimal second language acquisition support may be needed, express themselves in self-generated, connected written text in English in a manner nearly comparable to their native English-speaking peers *</li> </ul>

**\*These descriptors apply only to students who are at the developmental stage of generating original written text using a standard writing system.**

As shown in the PLDs, the writing PLDs for grades K–1 differ from those for grades 2–12 because they take into account that grades K–1 students, whether they are ELs or non-ELs, develop the ability to generate original written text at different rates. The asterisked descriptors are used only for students who have reached the emergent literacy stage of being able to generate connected written text using a standard writing system. A student who has not yet reached this developmental stage is eligible to receive any of the four English language proficiency ratings based on the remaining PLDs.

Taking the student’s stage of emergent writing into account, teachers are directed to read the proficiency levels as a whole and determine the student’s current overall English language writing proficiency. For students in the early or late stages of a proficiency level, raters are directed to determine the level at which the students perform most consistently.

The descriptors of the writing PLDs address the following elements and show the progress of writing proficiency from the beginning to advanced high level:

<b>1st descriptor</b>	Use of English to explain self-generated writing, including emergent forms of writing
<b>2nd descriptor</b>	Use of English to participate in shared writing activities
<b>3rd descriptor</b>	Use of English in self-generated, connected written text
<b>4th descriptor</b>	Print awareness and primary language features

## Instruction and Assessment

The following examples show the direct alignment between TELPAS and the ELPS. The first two examples include links to video clips of a student engaged in an activity from the [Grades K-1 Performance-Based Writing Activities](#) list. These types of activities help teachers stay attuned to students’ English language writing proficiency in ongoing instruction and for the spring TELPAS administration.

### Writing Example 1: Journal Writing, Kindergarten



**CLICK HERE** to see a student at the intermediate level of English language writing proficiency explaining an emergent form of self-generated writing. The topic is highly familiar and concrete and allows the student to use the high-frequency English he knows.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

Journal writing develops habits of writing and precursory literacy skills for emergent writers who have not yet learned to turn spoken language into a standard piece of writing. Journal writing is particularly beneficial for ELs. As teachers interact with young ELs about the contents of their journals, they gather information about the ELs’ literacy development as well as their ability to express themselves in English. The interactions contribute to building prerequisite

oral proficiency as well as writing proficiency in English. When teachers address both the ELPS and language arts student expectations in instruction, they are able to respond appropriately to promote both second language acquisition and early literacy.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment

The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed in this example are shown below.

ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Student Expectations 19 TAC §74.4(c)(5)</b></p> <p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <p><b>(A)</b> learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing in English</p> <p><b>(B)</b> write using newly acquired basic vocabulary and content-based grade-level vocabulary</p> <p><b>(G)</b> narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail to fulfill content area writing needs as more English is acquired</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Proficiency Level Descriptors 19 TAC §74.4(d)(5)</b></p> <p><b>(B)</b> Intermediate ELLs have a limited ability to use the English language to build foundational writing skills. These students:</p> <p><b>(i)</b> know enough English to explain briefly and simply self-generated writing, including emergent forms of writing, as long as the topic is highly familiar and concrete and requires very high-frequency English</p> <p><b>(ii)</b> can participate meaningfully in grade-appropriate shared writing activities using the English language only when the writing topic is highly familiar and concrete and requires very high-frequency English</p>

Some student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.

## Writing Example 2: Shared Writing for Literacy and Subject-Area Development, Grade 1



[CLICK HERE](#) to see ELs at the intermediate and advanced levels of writing participating in a shared writing activity in which they describe ways teachers help students.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

In shared writing activities, teachers and students collaborate to write a text together. This active demonstration of the writing process is an important experience for developing students' literacy skills. These activities also provide teachers with ongoing information about the extent to which an EL's English limitations may or may not be obstructing the student's ability to build foundational writing skills.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment

The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed in this example are shown on the following page.

## ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT

<b>Student Expectations</b> 19 TAC §74.4(c)(5)	<b>Proficiency Level Descriptors</b> 19 TAC §74.4(d)(5)
<p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing in English</li><li>(B) write using newly acquired basic vocabulary and content-based grade-level vocabulary</li><li>(E) employ increasingly complex grammatical structures in content area writing commensurate with grade-level expectations<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) using correct verbs, tenses, and pronouns/ antecedents</li></ul></li><li>(G) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail to fulfill content area writing needs as more English is acquired</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(B) Intermediate ELLs have a limited ability to use the English language to build foundational writing skills. These students:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(ii) can participate meaningfully in grade-appropriate shared writing activities using the English language only when the writing topic is highly familiar and concrete and requires very high-frequency English</li></ul></li><li>(C) Advanced ELLs have the ability to use the English language to build, with second language acquisition support, foundational writing skills. These students:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(ii) can participate meaningfully, with second language acquisition support, in most grade-appropriate shared writing activities using the English language</li></ul></li></ul>

**Some student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.**

## Writing Example 3: Rating a Student’s English Language Proficiency, Kindergarten

Example 3 includes teacher observations of a student’s writing proficiency and several writing samples for the student. The writing samples are provided to illustrate how teachers use the PLDs to holistically rate the writing proficiency of their grades K–1 ELs. A link to the student’s proficiency level rating, including the key features of the PLDs exhibited, is also provided.

Graciana is not yet beyond the stage of using emergent forms of writing. Yesterday during journal time, Graciana wrote a **story about playing with a friend at recess**. She read the story to me. She could use only simple English to explain her writing on this highly familiar topic.

In shared writing activities such as Morning Message, Graciana has difficulty contributing when the topic is unfamiliar. However, Graciana participates more meaningfully using high-frequency English when the topic is familiar.

After a science activity that included working in the class garden, Graciana wrote a **story about how we all worked together to pull weeds**. The topic was concrete and familiar to her, so she was able to explain her writing simply, although she displayed some primary language features.

Last week after Family Math Night, Graciana wrote **a story about what her family did**. She used high-frequency words, and there were several primary language features.

**[CLICK HERE](#)** to see Graciana’s writing proficiency level rating.

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**Reminder:** Teachers do not use video recordings during the actual administration of TELPAS. They use the knowledge of the student’s English language proficiency level obtained through daily classroom observations and interactions. Video clips are used during TELPAS rater training to calibrate teachers to use the PLDs consistently and accurately for the spring assessment.

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# TELPAS, Grades 2–12

As described in the previous section, the TELPAS listening and speaking and TELPAS reading assessments for grades 2–12 are administered online, and the grades 2–12 writing assessments are holistically rated. Both online and holistically rated TELPAS assessments are administered in the spring of each year.

## Layout and Administration of TELPAS Online Tests

Students taking the TELPAS listening and speaking and TELPAS reading online tests will respond to test questions of all proficiency levels. In response to input from Texas educators, the questions do not appear in strict proficiency level order. Each test starts with questions from lower proficiency levels. As students proceed through each test, the proficiency levels are mixed so that more difficult test questions and passages are interspersed with easier ones.

The test administration directions read aloud before each test inform students that they will encounter test questions and passages that are easy or difficult, depending on how much English they know. Students are informed that each test measures how much English they learn each year. Students are encouraged to do their best on the parts of the test they can understand and not to worry about the parts that they do not understand. Students new to the English language are encouraged to continue testing when they encounter a test question or passage that is difficult to understand, as easier test questions and passages will likely follow.

## TELPAS Listening, Grades 2–12

English language proficiency in listening is defined for TELPAS as the ability to understand spoken language, comprehend and extract information, and follow social and instructional discourse. ELs who are English proficient in the domain of listening understand spoken English well enough to participate meaningfully and with minimal second language acquisition support in grade-level academic instruction.

### Performance-Based Listening Activities

The following types of performance-based activities are recommended as ways to develop the listening proficiency of students. They can also be used for formative assessment throughout the year. This list of activities is not exhaustive.

#### Grades 2–12 Performance-Based Listening Activities

- reacting to oral presentations
- responding to text read aloud
- following directions
- large-group and small-group instructional interactions
- cooperative group work
- informal interactions with peers
- one-on-one interviews
- individual student conferences

## ELPS Student Expectations and PLDs

TELPAS listening and speaking tests measure the student expectations for listening at the levels of English language proficiency defined in the ELPS proficiency level descriptors.

### **ELPS Student Expectations for Listening, 19 TAC 74.4(c)(2)**

**(2) Cross-curricular second language acquisition/listening. The ELL listens to a variety of speakers including teachers, peers, and electronic media to gain an increasing level of comprehension of newly acquired language in all content areas. ELLs may be at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition in listening. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student's level of English language proficiency. The student is expected to:**

- (A) distinguish sounds and intonation patterns of English with increasing ease;
- (B) recognize elements of the English sound system in newly acquired vocabulary such as long and short vowels, silent letters, and consonant clusters;
- (C) learn new language structures, expressions, and basic and academic vocabulary heard during classroom instruction and interactions;
- (D) monitor understanding of spoken language during classroom instruction and interactions and seek clarification as needed;
- (E) use visual, contextual, and linguistic support to enhance and confirm understanding of increasingly complex and elaborated spoken language;
- (F) listen to and derive meaning from a variety of media such as audio tape, video, DVD, and CD ROM to build and reinforce concept and language attainment;
- (G) understand the general meaning, main points, and important details of spoken language ranging from situations in which topics, language, and contexts are familiar to unfamiliar;
- (H) understand implicit ideas and information in increasingly complex spoken language commensurate with grade-level learning expectations; and
- (I) demonstrate listening comprehension of increasingly complex spoken English by following directions, retelling or summarizing spoken messages, responding to questions and requests, collaborating with peers, and taking notes commensurate with content and grade-level needs.

## ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors, 19 TAC 74.4(d)(1) Grades K–12 Listening

BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
<p><b>(A) Beginning ELLs have little or no ability to understand spoken English used in academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(B) Intermediate ELLs have the ability to understand simple, high-frequency spoken English used in routine academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(C) Advanced ELLs have the ability to understand, with second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate spoken English used in academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(D) Advanced high ELLs have the ability to understand, with minimal second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate spoken English used in academic and social settings.</b></p>
<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> struggle to understand simple conversations and simple discussions even when the topics are familiar and the speaker uses linguistic supports such as visuals, slower speech and other verbal cues, and gestures</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> struggle to identify and distinguish individual words and phrases during social and instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> may not seek clarification in English when failing to comprehend the English they hear; frequently remain silent, watching others for cues</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> usually understand simple or routine directions, as well as short, simple conversations and short, simple discussions on familiar topics; when topics are unfamiliar, require extensive linguistic supports and adaptations such as visuals, slower speech and other verbal cues, simplified language, gestures, and preteaching to preview or build topic-related vocabulary</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> often identify and distinguish key words and phrases necessary to understand the general meaning during social and basic instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> have the ability to seek clarification in English when failing to comprehend the English they hear by requiring/ requesting the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase speech</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> usually understand longer, more elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and some unfamiliar topics, but sometimes need processing time and sometimes depend on visuals, verbal cues, and gestures to support understanding</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> understand most main points, most important details, and some implicit information during social and basic instructional interactions that have not been intentionally modified for ELLs</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> occasionally require/request the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase to clarify the meaning of the English they hear</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> understand longer, elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and unfamiliar topics with occasional need for processing time and with little dependence on visuals, verbal cues, and gestures; some exceptions when complex academic or highly specialized language is used</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> understand main points, important details, and implicit information at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers during social and instructional interactions</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> rarely require/request the speaker to repeat, slow down, or rephrase to clarify the meaning of the English they hear</li> </ul>

As shown in the PLDs, the descriptors in each column define the summary statements. The progression of second language acquisition can be seen by reading the descriptors across the columns, from the beginning to the advanced high level.

<b>1st descriptor</b>	Type of spoken English understood and how much the understanding is dependent on supports and linguistic adaptations
<b>2nd descriptor</b>	Degree of comprehension demonstrated when interactions are not modified to include supports and linguistic adaptations
<b>3rd descriptor</b>	Degree of need to seek clarification to understand or confirm meaning of spoken English

## TELPAS Speaking, Grades 2–12

English language proficiency in speaking is defined for TELPAS as the ability to use spoken English appropriately and effectively in learning activities and social interactions. The definition relates specifically to the communication skills that an EL needs in order to use English as an effective medium for academic instruction.

### Performance-Based Speaking Activities

The following types of performance-based activities are recommended as ways to develop the speaking proficiency of students. They can also be used for formative assessment throughout the year. This list of activities is not exhaustive.

#### Grades 2–12 Performance-Based Speaking Activities

- cooperative group work
- oral presentations
- informal interactions with peers
- large-group and small-group instructional interactions
- one-on-one interviews
- classroom discussions
- articulation of problem-solving strategies
- individual student conferences

## ELPS Student Expectations and PLDs

TELPAS listening and speaking tests measure the student expectations for speaking at the levels of English language proficiency defined in the ELPS proficiency level descriptors.

### ELPS Student Expectations for Speaking K–12, 19 TAC 74.4(c)(3)

**(3) Cross-curricular second language acquisition/speaking. The ELL speaks in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes with an awareness of different language registers (formal/informal) using vocabulary with increasing fluency and accuracy in language arts and all content areas. ELLs may be at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition in speaking. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student’s level of English language proficiency. The student is expected to:**

- (A) practice producing sounds of newly acquired vocabulary such as long and short vowels, silent letters, and consonant clusters to pronounce English words in a manner that is increasingly comprehensible;
- (B) expand and internalize initial English vocabulary by learning and using high-frequency English words necessary for identifying and describing people, places, and objects, by retelling simple stories and basic information represented or supported by pictures, and by learning and using routine language needed for classroom communication;
- (C) speak using a variety of grammatical structures, sentence lengths, sentence types, and connecting words with increasing accuracy and ease as more English is acquired;
- (D) speak using grade-level content area vocabulary in context to internalize new English words and build academic language proficiency;
- (E) share information in cooperative learning interactions;
- (F) ask and give information ranging from using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts, to using abstract and content-based vocabulary during extended speaking assignments;
- (G) express opinions, ideas, and feelings ranging from communicating single words and short phrases to participating in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics;
- (H) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired;
- (I) adapt spoken language appropriately for formal and informal purposes; and
- (J) respond orally to information presented in a wide variety of print, electronic, audio, and visual media to build and reinforce concept and language attainment.

## ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors, 19 TAC 74.4(d)(2) Grades K–12 Speaking

BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
<p><b>(A) Beginning ELLs have little or no ability to speak English in academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(B) Intermediate ELLs have the ability to speak in a simple manner using English commonly heard in routine academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(C) Advanced ELLs have the ability to speak using grade-appropriate English, with second language acquisition support, in academic and social settings.</b></p>	<p><b>(D) Advanced high ELLs have the ability to speak using grade-appropriate English, with minimal second language acquisition support, in academic and social settings.</b></p>
<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> mainly speak using single words and short phrases consisting of recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar material to get immediate needs met; may be hesitant to speak and often give up in their attempts to communicate</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> speak using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> lack the knowledge of English grammar necessary to connect ideas and speak in sentences; can sometimes produce sentences using recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar material</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> exhibit second language acquisition errors that may hinder overall communication, particularly when trying to convey information beyond memorized, practiced, or highly familiar material</li> <li><b>(v)</b> typically use pronunciation that significantly inhibits communication</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to express simple, original messages, speak using sentences, and participate in short conversations and classroom interactions; may hesitate frequently and for long periods to think about how to communicate desired meaning</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> speak simply using basic vocabulary needed in everyday social interactions and routine academic contexts; rarely have vocabulary to speak in detail</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> exhibit an emerging awareness of English grammar and speak using mostly simple sentence structures and simple tenses; are most comfortable speaking in present tense</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> exhibit second language acquisition errors that may hinder overall communication when trying to use complex or less familiar English</li> <li><b>(v)</b> use pronunciation that can usually be understood by people accustomed to interacting with ELLs</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to participate comfortably in most conversations and academic discussions on familiar topics, with some pauses to restate, repeat, or search for words and phrases to clarify meaning</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> discuss familiar academic topics using content-based terms and common abstract vocabulary; can usually speak in some detail on familiar topics</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> have a grasp of basic grammar features, including a basic ability to narrate and describe in present, past, and future tenses; have an emerging ability to use complex sentences and complex grammar features</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> make errors that interfere somewhat with communication when using complex grammar structures, long sentences, and less familiar words and expressions</li> <li><b>(v)</b> may mispronounce words, but use pronunciation that can usually be understood by people not accustomed to interacting with ELLs</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to participate in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics with only occasional disruptions, hesitations, or pauses</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> communicate effectively using abstract and content-based vocabulary during classroom instructional tasks, with some exceptions when low-frequency or academically demanding vocabulary is needed; use many of the same idioms and colloquialisms as their native English-speaking peers</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> can use English grammar structures and complex sentences to narrate and describe at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> make few second language acquisition errors that interfere with overall communication</li> <li><b>(v)</b> may mispronounce words, but rarely use pronunciation that interferes with overall communication</li> </ul>

As shown in the PLDs, the descriptors for the speaking PLDs address the following elements.

<b>1st descriptor</b>	Discourse type and length; fluency
<b>2nd descriptor</b>	Vocabulary
<b>3rd descriptor</b>	Grammar structures
<b>4th descriptor</b>	Accuracy
<b>5th descriptor</b>	Pronunciation

## TELPAS Online Listening and Speaking Test

### Listening and Speaking Test Blueprint

The following table shows the number of possible points a student may earn per reporting category for the TELPAS listening and speaking test.

	Reporting Category	Possible Points
<b>Listening</b>	Reporting Category 1: Understand spoken words and language structures	5
	Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of spoken English	16
	Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information in spoken English	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Speaking</b>	Reporting Category 1: Provide and summarize information	16
	Reporting Category 2: Share opinions and analyze information	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>

### Listening Reporting Categories

The majority of the ELPS student expectations for listening are organized under three TELPAS listening reporting categories, or skill areas, which follow.

#### Listening Reporting Category 1

**The student will demonstrate an understanding of spoken words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English.**

The student is expected to

- (C) learn new language structures, expressions, and basic and academic vocabulary heard during classroom instruction and interactions; and

- (E) use visual, contextual, and linguistic support to enhance and confirm understanding of increasingly complex and elaborated spoken language.

### **Listening Reporting Category 2**

**The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of spoken English used in a variety of contexts.**

The student is expected to

- (G) understand the general meaning, main points, and important details of spoken language ranging from situations in which topics, language, and contexts are familiar to unfamiliar; and
- (I) demonstrate listening comprehension of increasingly complex spoken English by following directions, retelling or summarizing spoken messages, responding to questions and requests, collaborating with peers, and taking notes commensurate with content and grade-level needs.

### **Listening Reporting Category 3**

**The student will demonstrate an ability to analyze and evaluate information and ideas presented in spoken English in a variety of contexts.**

The student is expected to

- (H) understand implicit ideas and information in increasingly complex spoken language commensurate with grade-level learning expectations.

The following ELPS student expectations are assessed throughout the test and are not specific to any one reporting category:

- (A) distinguish sounds and intonation patterns of English with increasing ease
- (B) recognize elements of the English sound system in newly acquired vocabulary such as long and short vowels, silent letters, and consonant clusters
- (D) monitor understanding of spoken language during classroom instruction and interactions and seek clarification as needed
- (F) listen to and derive meaning from a variety of media such as audio tape, video, DVD, and CD ROM to build and reinforce concept and language attainment

### **Speaking Reporting Categories**

The majority of the ELPS student expectations are organized under two TELPAS speaking reporting categories, or skill areas, which follow.



## **Speaking Reporting Category 1**

**The student will demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations.**

The student is expected to

- (F) ask and give information ranging from using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts, to using abstract and content-based vocabulary during extended speaking assignments; and
- (H) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired.

## **Speaking Reporting Category 2**

**The student will demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to share opinions and analyze information in a variety of academic and social situations.**

The student is expected to

- (G) express opinions, ideas, and feelings ranging from communicating single words and short phrases to participating in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics; and
- (J) respond orally to information presented in a wide variety of print, electronic, audio, and visual media to build and reinforce concept and language attainment.

The following ELPS student expectations are assessed throughout the test and are not specific to any one reporting category:

- (A) practice producing sounds of newly acquired vocabulary such as long and short vowels, silent letters, and consonant clusters to pronounce English words in a manner that is increasingly comprehensible
- (B) expand and internalize initial English vocabulary by learning and using high-frequency English words necessary for identifying and describing people, places, and objects, by retelling simple stories and basic information represented or supported by pictures, and by learning and using routine language needed for classroom communication
- (C) speak using a variety of grammatical structures, sentence lengths, sentence types, and connecting words with increasing accuracy and ease as more English is acquired
- (D) speak using grade-level subject-area vocabulary in context to internalize new English words and build academic language proficiency

(E) share information in cooperative learning interactions

(I) adapt spoken language appropriately for formal and informal purposes

## Test Format

- Beginning- and intermediate-level listening test questions measure the ability to understand everyday, high-frequency spoken English and routine academic language. Advanced and advanced high listening test questions measure whether students are acquiring the academic language necessary to understand spoken information during grade-appropriate instruction in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- The tests consist of listening and speaking stimuli and test questions aligned to the four proficiency levels defined in the PLDs.
- A variety of narrative, procedural, and informational stimuli are included. Listening passages may focus on social interactions or academic content and are accompanied by passage-based listening comprehension questions. Standalone listening questions might be accompanied by a prompt asking the student to click on an object in a picture, identify the picture that matches the prompt, or put a number of pictures in order according to a story.
- A variety of stimuli requiring a variety of spoken responses are included. Responses require a range of vocabulary encompassing social and academic language. For example, students may be shown a map and prompted to explain how to get from one location to another. They may be prompted to tell a story, describe a picture, or compare two pictures. Students are encouraged to speak as much as they can when responding to speaking prompts.
- All test content is designed to be age appropriate.
- To interact with speaking questions, students will use audio capture functionality to record a response, listen to the response, and delete and re-record it if not satisfied with their first response. Students should speak in complete sentences and use their best English vocabulary when responding.
- Some speaking prompts are intended to solicit shorter responses; others are intended to solicit longer responses. For simple prompts, students have 45 seconds to respond; for open-ended, more complex prompts, students have 90 seconds. Students are able to listen to the recorded prompt as many times as needed before responding. Students may plan their response on scratch paper or the notepad in the test application before recording their response. The student's responses to the prompts determine the student's proficiency level.

## Speaking Rubrics

As part of the TELPAS listening and speaking assessment, [speaking rubrics](#) were developed to determine the score points that should be ascribed to a student's response based on each speaking test item performance. The rubrics demonstrate the number of score points that a student can achieve based on each speaking test item performance. Two different rubrics, a two-point rubric and a four-point rubric, are used to score different types of speaking items.

Both rubrics are derived from the TELPAS PLDs. The rubrics demonstrate how a student will be assessed for speaking; however, the rubrics should not replace the Texas ELPS or PLDs and should not be used in isolation.

## Annotated Test Item Descriptions

Descriptions of item types on the TELPAS listening and speaking test are included on the following pages. Annotations are provided to describe the alignment of each listening and speaking item type with the ELPS student expectations, to identify the targeted proficiency level(s) of each listening item type, and to explain possible point values of each item type. Listening items are worth one point each unless otherwise noted. Annotations for speaking items will indicate the amount of time allotted for a student to record a response and the maximum point value a response can earn based on the speech characteristics (e.g., pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar) of that particular response.

### Listening Item Type: Listen to a Description to Identify an Object

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an understanding of spoken words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English
<b>SE*</b>	(C) Learn new language structures, expressions, and basic and academic vocabulary heard during classroom instruction and interactions
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to listen to a prompt and identify an object within an image or set of images by clicking on a hotspot.
<b>Point Values</b>	Students will earn one point for a correct response to an item of this type.
<b>Targeted Proficiency Level(s)</b>	Beginning, Intermediate

\* ELPS student expectation (SE)

### Listening Item Type: Follow Spoken Directions to Find a Location

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Demonstrate a basic understanding of spoken English used in a variety of contexts
<b>SE</b>	(I) Demonstrate listening comprehension of increasingly complex spoken English by following directions, retelling or summarizing spoken messages, responding to questions and requests, collaborating with peers, and taking notes commensurate with content and grade-level needs
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to listen to directions and identify the location on a map that corresponds to those directions by clicking on a hotspot.
<b>Point Values</b>	Students will earn one point for a correct response to an item of this type.
<b>Targeted Proficiency Level(s)</b>	Beginning, Intermediate

## Listening Item Type: Match Images with Recorded Descriptions

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Demonstrate a basic understanding of spoken English used in a variety of contexts
<b>SE</b>	(I) Demonstrate listening comprehension of increasingly complex spoken English by following directions, retelling or summarizing spoken messages, responding to questions and requests, collaborating with peers, and taking notes commensurate with content and grade-level needs
<b>Description</b>	These question types require the EL to listen to prompts and match prompts with corresponding images. Depending on the question type, the student may select from one of four prompts or images as answer choices, or the student may drag images into place next to each image’s corresponding prompt.
<b>Point Values</b>	Point values for this item type vary from one to four points for items using the drag-and-drop matching functionality. A student will receive a point for each image correctly matched with its corresponding prompt.
<b>Targeted Proficiency Level(s)</b>	Beginning, Intermediate

## Listening Item Type: Sequence Images Based on a Recorded Stimulus

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Demonstrate a basic understanding of spoken English used in a variety of contexts
<b>SE</b>	(G) Understand the general meaning, main points, and important details of spoken language ranging from situations in which topics, language, and contexts are familiar to unfamiliar
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to listen to a stimulus and put a series of images in order based on the stimulus by dragging images into their corresponding positions.
<b>Point Values</b>	Point values for this item type range from one to three points if images in the sequence are placed in the correct order.
<b>Targeted Proficiency Level(s)</b>	Beginning, Intermediate

## Listening Item Type: Identify the Meaning of a Word or Phrase in a Recorded Stimulus

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an understanding of spoken words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English
<b>SE</b>	(E) Use visual, contextual, and linguistic support to enhance and confirm understanding of increasingly complex and elaborated spoken language
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to listen to a segment of a recorded selection and identify the meaning of an unknown word from that segment. The student selects a response from four answer choices.
<b>Point Values</b>	Students will earn one point for a correct response to an item of this type.
<b>Targeted Proficiency Level(s)</b>	Advanced, Advanced High

## Listening Item Type: Understand Main Ideas and Important Details in a Recorded Stimulus

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Demonstrate a basic understanding of spoken English used in a variety of contexts
<b>SE</b>	(G) Understand the general meaning, main points, and important details of spoken language ranging from situations in which topics, language, and contexts are familiar to unfamiliar
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to listen to a segment of a recorded selection and identify a main idea or important detail from that segment. For example, the student may be asked to identify a summary, main problem/conflict, chronology of events, or setting, among other tasks. The student selects a response from four answer choices.
<b>Point Values</b>	Students will earn one point for a correct response to an item of this type.
<b>Targeted Proficiency Level(s)</b>	Advanced, Advanced High

## Listening Item Type: Analyze and Draw Conclusions from a Recorded Stimulus

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Demonstrate an ability to analyze and evaluate information and ideas presented in spoken English in a variety of contexts
<b>SE</b>	(H) Understand implicit ideas and information in increasingly complex spoken language commensurate with grade-level learning expectations
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to listen to a segment of a recorded selection and analyze or evaluate that segment. For example, the student may be asked to identify the cause or effect of an event; identify a character's feelings or traits; or draw a conclusion or inference, among other tasks. The student selects a response from four answer choices.
<b>Point Values</b>	Students will earn one point for a correct response to an item of this type.
<b>Targeted Proficiency Level(s)</b>	Advanced, Advanced High

## Speaking Item Type: Formulate and Ask a Question

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(F) Ask and give information ranging from using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts, to using abstract and content-based vocabulary during extended speaking assignments
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to formulate a question about a given image, using an accompanying prompt.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 45 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of two points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Explain a Response or Reaction to a Situation

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(F) Ask and give information ranging from using a very limited bank of high-frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts, to using abstract and content-based vocabulary during extended speaking assignments
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to explain or tell a personal reaction or response, given a situation or scenario.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 45 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of two points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Describe a Picture

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(H) Narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to describe a picture. In the description, the student is asked to include a minimum of three pieces of information about the picture.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 45 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of two points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Talk About a Future Event

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(H) Narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL make a prediction about a future event related to an image, given the image and an accompanying prompt.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 45 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of two points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Give Directions

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(H) Narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL give directions from a starting point to an ending point, given a map and an accompanying prompt.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 45 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of two points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Explain a Process

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(H) Narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to explain the steps needed to carry out and complete a process or product. In this question type, the EL is given an image of the completed process and images of the interim steps, as well as an accompanying prompt.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 90 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of four points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Tell a Story Based on Picture Cues

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(H) Narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to narrate a story, given a series of four sequenced images.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 90 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of four points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Explain or Summarize a Recorded Stimulus

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(H) Narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to respond to a prompt about a listening selection. Prompts will vary. For example, the student may be asked to retell a story; explain problems, conflicts, and/or solutions; or summarize main ideas and facts, among other tasks.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 90 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of four points for this item type.



## Speaking Item Type: Analyze or Express Opinions About a Recorded Stimulus

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to share opinions and analyze information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(J) Respond orally to information presented in a wide variety of print, electronic, audio, and visual media to build and reinforce concept and language attainment
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to respond to a prompt about a listening selection. Prompts will vary. For example, the student may be asked to describe a character’s traits, feelings, or motives; synthesize information from the selection; explain a personal connection with or express an opinion about the selection; or draw and defend conclusions about the selection, among other tasks.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 90 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of four points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Compare and Contrast Images

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to share opinions and analyze information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(J) Respond orally to information presented in a wide variety of print, electronic, audio, and visual media to build and reinforce concept and language attainment
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to compare and contrast two images. In the response, the student is asked to include a minimum of two similarities and two differences between the images.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 90 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of four points for this item type.

## Speaking Item Type: Respond to Open-Ended Questions

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to share opinions and analyze information in a variety of academic and social situations
<b>SE</b>	(G) Express opinions, ideas, and feelings ranging from communicating single words and short phrases to participating in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to respond to an open-ended prompt. Prompts will vary. For example, the student may be asked to recount past experiences; give advice or make recommendations; express and explain likes and dislikes; discuss future or hypothetical events; or describe individuals or events, among other tasks.
<b>Point Values</b>	A student has 90 seconds to record a response, and the response may earn a maximum of four points for this item type.

## Practice Sets and Released Tests

Several TELPAS online resources related to the listening and speaking tests are available on the [TELPAS Resources](#) webpage.

- [Listening and Speaking Practice Sets](#)

To interact with item types on the TELPAS listening and speaking assessments and to see how these items appear in the online format, review the listening and speaking practice sets. There are four listening and speaking practice sets, one for each grade band: grades 2–3; grades 4–5; grades 6–8; and grades 9–12. Each practice set contains a representative sampling of released test items across the two domains. These practice sets are intended solely for students to practice on listening and speaking questions and should not be used for diagnostic purposes.

- [2020 Released TELPAS Listening and Speaking Tests for Grades 2–12](#)

These released tests can be administered to students for diagnostic purposes. The Student Practice Site will only score listening items.

- [TELPAS Speaking Scoring Guides](#)

TELPAS speaking scoring guides were developed to accompany the TELPAS listening and speaking released tests. Each scoring guide includes exemplar student responses to four questions from the speaking assessment for that grade band, the score that each response received, and an explanation of why the response received that score.

## TELPAS Reading, Grades 2–12

English language proficiency in reading is defined for TELPAS as the ability to comprehend and interpret written text at the grade-appropriate level. The definition is not tied specifically to the language arts discipline but more broadly to the ability to read texts typically encountered during all grade-level instruction.

### Reading Domain of English Language Proficiency Versus Language Arts

TELPAS reading tests differ from language arts reading tests in two ways:

1. TELPAS reading tests measure more specifically the ability to read in mathematics, science, and social studies contexts.

2. TELPAS reading tests are designed around the stages of second language acquisition, while language arts reading tests are designed around grade-level reading expectations. Non-ELs are assumed to have had the same amount of time to learn English and meet grade-level reading expectations. Because ELs may begin learning English at any age, assumptions cannot be made about how much English they can be expected to understand and read at a given grade level. The advanced high reading material on TELPAS includes texts similar to those encountered in grade-level instruction, because this is the stage at which students need minimal second language acquisition support to read grade-level material. The tests also, however, include reading material designed to assess the stages of second language acquisition that lead up to the advanced high level.

It is important to keep in mind that ELs who struggle to read grade-level English do not necessarily struggle to read in their native language.

## **ELPS Student Expectations and PLDs**

Some portions of the student expectations apply strictly to instructional activities. TELPAS assesses the portions of the student expectations that can be measured in a standardized, multiple-choice test format.

Each TELPAS reading selection and test question is written for a particular proficiency level in alignment with the PLDs.

## **ELPS Student Expectations for Reading 2–12, 19 TAC 74.4(c)(4)**

**(4) Cross-curricular second language acquisition/reading. The ELL reads a variety of texts for a variety of purposes with an increasing level of comprehension in all content areas. ELLs may be at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition in reading. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student’s level of English language proficiency. For Kindergarten and Grade 1, certain of these student expectations apply to text read aloud for students not yet at the stage of decoding written text. The student is expected to:**

- (A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language and decode (sound out) words using a combination of skills such as recognizing sound-letter relationships and identifying cognates, affixes, roots, and base words;
- (B) recognize directionality of English reading such as left to right and top to bottom;
- (C) develop basic sight vocabulary, derive meaning of environmental print, and comprehend English vocabulary and language structures used routinely in written classroom materials;
- (D) use prereading supports such as graphic organizers, illustrations, and pretaught topic-related vocabulary and other prereading activities to enhance comprehension of written text;
- (E) read linguistically accommodated content area material with a decreasing need for linguistic accommodations as more English is learned;
- (F) use visual and contextual support and support from peers and teachers to read grade-appropriate content area text, enhance and confirm understanding, and develop vocabulary, grasp of language structures, and background knowledge needed to comprehend increasingly challenging language;
- (G) demonstrate comprehension of increasingly complex English by participating in shared reading, retelling or summarizing material, responding to questions, and taking notes commensurate with content area and grade level needs;
- (H) read silently with increasing ease and comprehension for longer periods;
- (I) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing basic reading skills such as demonstrating understanding of supporting ideas and details in text and graphic sources, summarizing text, and distinguishing main ideas from details commensurate with content area needs;
- (J) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing inferential skills such as predicting, making connections between ideas, drawing inferences and conclusions from text and graphic sources, and finding supporting text evidence commensurate with content area needs; and
- (K) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing analytical skills such as evaluating written information and performing critical analyses commensurate with content area and grade-level needs.

## ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors, 19 TAC 74.4(d)(4) Grades 2–12 Reading

BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
<p><b>(A) Beginning ELLs have little or no ability to read and understand English used in academic and social contexts.</b></p>	<p><b>(B) Intermediate ELLs have the ability to read and understand simple, high-frequency English used in routine academic and social contexts.</b></p>	<p><b>(C) Advanced ELLs have the ability to read and understand, with second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate English used in academic and social contexts.</b></p>	<p><b>(D) Advanced high ELLs have the ability to read and understand, with minimal second language acquisition support, grade-appropriate English used in academic and social contexts.</b></p>
<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> read and understand the very limited recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar English they have learned; vocabulary predominantly includes               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> environmental print</li> <li><b>(II)</b> some very high-frequency words</li> <li><b>(III)</b> concrete words that can be represented by pictures</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>(ii)</b> read slowly, word by word</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> have a very limited sense of English language structures</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> comprehend predominantly isolated familiar words and phrases; comprehend some sentences in highly routine contexts or recently practiced, highly familiar text</li> <li><b>(v)</b> are highly dependent on visuals and prior knowledge to derive meaning from text in English</li> <li><b>(vi)</b> are able to apply reading comprehension skills in English only when reading texts written for this level</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> read and understand English vocabulary on a somewhat wider range of topics and with increased depth; vocabulary predominantly includes               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> everyday oral language</li> <li><b>(II)</b> literal meanings of common words</li> <li><b>(III)</b> routine academic language and terms</li> <li><b>(IV)</b> commonly used abstract language such as terms used to describe basic feelings</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>(ii)</b> often read slowly and in short phrases; may re-read to clarify meaning</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> have a growing understanding of basic, routinely used English language structures</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> understand simple sentences in short, connected texts, but are dependent on visual cues, topic familiarity, prior knowledge, pretaught topic-related vocabulary, story predictability, and teacher/peer assistance to sustain comprehension</li> <li><b>(v)</b> struggle to independently read and understand grade-level texts</li> <li><b>(vi)</b> are able to apply basic and some higher-order comprehension skills when reading texts that are linguistically accommodated and/or simplified for this level</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> read and understand, with second language acquisition support, a variety of grade-appropriate English vocabulary used in social and academic contexts               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> with second language acquisition support, read and understand grade-appropriate concrete and abstract vocabulary, but have difficulty with less commonly encountered words</li> <li><b>(II)</b> demonstrate an emerging ability to understand words and phrases beyond their literal meaning</li> <li><b>(III)</b> understand multiple meanings of commonly used words</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>(ii)</b> read longer phrases and simple sentences from familiar text with appropriate rate and speed</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> are developing skill in using their growing familiarity with English language structures to construct meaning of grade-appropriate text</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> are able to apply basic and higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text, but are still occasionally dependent on visuals, teacher/peer assistance, and other linguistically accommodated text features to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> read and understand vocabulary at a level nearly comparable to that of their native English-speaking peers, with some exceptions when low-frequency or specialized vocabulary is used</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> generally read grade-appropriate, familiar text with appropriate rate, speed, intonation, and expression</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> are able to, at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers, use their familiarity with English language structures to construct meaning of grade-appropriate text</li> <li><b>(iv)</b> are able to apply, with minimal second language acquisition support and at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers, basic and higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text</li> </ul>

As shown in the PLDs, the summary statement and descriptors for each proficiency level form a student profile. The PLDs give teachers information that helps them linguistically support the ability of ELs to comprehend information in grade-level texts and advance to the next proficiency level.

## Test Blueprints

The following tables show the number of test questions per reporting category on each grade-cluster TELPAS reading test.

Grade 2	
Reporting Category	Number of Questions
Reporting Category 1: Understand words and language structures	12
Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of variety of texts written in English	7
Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English	11
<b>Total</b>	30

Grade 3	
Reporting Category	Number of Questions
Reporting Category 1: Understand words and language structures	12
Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of variety of texts written in English	9
Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English	13
<b>Total</b>	34

Grades 4–5	
Reporting Category	Number of Questions
Reporting Category 1: Understand words and language structures	12
Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of variety of texts written in English	10
Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>

Grades 6–7	
Reporting Category	Number of Questions
Reporting Category 1: Understand words and language structures	12
Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of variety of texts written in English	10
Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

Grades 8–9	
Reporting Category	Number of Questions
Reporting Category 1: Understand words and language structures	12
Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of variety of texts written in English	10
Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

Grades 10–12	
Reporting Category	Number of Questions
Reporting Category 1: Understand words and language structures	12
Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of variety of texts written in English	10
Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

## Reading Reporting Categories

The majority of the ELPS student expectations are organized under three TELPAS reading reporting categories, or skill areas, which follow.

### Reading Reporting Category 1

**The student will demonstrate an understanding of words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English.**

The student is expected to:

- (C) develop basic sight vocabulary, derive meaning of environmental print, and comprehend English vocabulary and language structures used routinely in written classroom materials
- (F) use visual and contextual support and support from peers and teachers to read grade-appropriate subject-area text, enhance and confirm understanding, and develop vocabulary, grasp of language structures, and background knowledge needed to comprehend increasingly challenging language

### Reading Reporting Category 2

**The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of a variety of texts written in English.**

The student is expected to:

- (G) demonstrate comprehension of increasingly complex English by participating in shared reading, retelling or summarizing material, responding to questions, and taking notes commensurate with subject-area and grade level needs
- (I) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing basic reading skills such as demonstrating understanding of supporting ideas and details in text and graphic sources, summarizing text, and



distinguishing main ideas from details commensurate with subject-area needs

### **Reading Reporting Category 3**

**The student will demonstrate an ability to analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English.**

The student is expected to:

- J) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing inferential skills such as predicting, making connections between ideas, drawing inferences and conclusions from text and graphic sources, and finding supporting text evidence commensurate with subject-area needs
- (K) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing analytical skills such as evaluating written information and performing critical analyses commensurate with subject-area and grade-level needs

The following ELPS student expectations are assessed throughout the test and are not specific to any one reporting category.

The student is expected to

- (A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language and decode (sound out) words using a combination of skills such as recognizing sound-letter relationships and identifying cognates, affixes, roots, and base words;
- (B) recognize directionality of English reading such as left to right and top to bottom;
- (D) use prereading supports such as graphic organizers, illustrations, and pretaught topic-related vocabulary and other prereading activities to enhance comprehension of written text;
- (E) read linguistically accommodated subject-area material with a decreasing need for linguistic accommodations as more English is learned; and
- (H) read silently with increasing ease and comprehension for longer periods.

### **Test Format**

- Beginning- and intermediate-level reading material measures the ability to read and understand everyday, high-frequency English and routine academic language. Advanced and advanced high reading material measures whether students are acquiring the academic language proficiency necessary for reading and processing information during grade-appropriate instruction in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

- The tests consist primarily of reading passages and test questions aligned to the four proficiency levels defined in the PLDs. Some questions are not associated with a reading passage. Such questions may use a cloze (fill-in-the-blank) format, include questions based on illustrations, include a short text followed by a multiple-choice question, or include questions with a drag-and-drop functionality to test vocabulary.
- A variety of narrative, procedural, and informational reading passages are included. Passages span a wide variety of purposes, such as reading for enjoyment and literary appreciation, reading to engage in core subject-area instruction, and reading for everyday, practical purposes.
- The reading passages and test questions are designed to be age-appropriate.
- There is no specified length for reading passages. Texts generally increase in length as proficiency levels increase.
- Although most test questions that accompany a reading passage assess the same proficiency level, the proficiency level of the questions that appear with a passage may vary.

# Annotated Test Samples

TELPAS reading sample test questions and reading passages are shown on the following pages. The four proficiency levels are represented as well as the six grade clusters. Annotations are provided to describe the question types and alignment of the test with the ELPS student expectations and PLDs. The samples are not formatted as they appear in the online tests. See the next section for information about how to access the samples in the online format.

## Word Identification Questions

**Grades 8-9 Beginning**

These are \_\_\_\_\_.



- trees
- birds
- cars
- clouds

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 - Understand words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English
<b>SE*</b>	(C) Develop basic sight vocabulary
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to fill in the blank in a short sentence with the English word pictured. Words assessed are among the earliest learned by students new to the English language. This question type assesses the early stages of the beginning level and is developed for all grades.
<b>PLDs**</b>	(A) (i) Beginning ELLs read and understand the very limited recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar English they have learned, such as high-frequency words and concrete words that can be represented by pictures.

\* ELPS student expectation (SE)  
 \*\* ELPS proficiency level descriptors (PLDs)

# Cloze Questions Assessing Everyday and Routine Academic Language

## Grades 10–12 Intermediate

Rosario wants to make a sandwich. First she puts two \_\_\_\_\_ of bread on a plate.

meats

hands

cheese

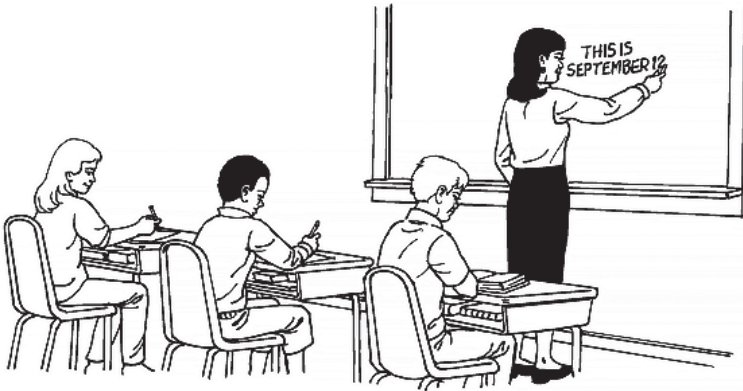
slices



<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Understand words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English
<b>SE</b>	(C) Comprehend English vocabulary and language structures used routinely in written classroom materials
<b>Description</b>	This question type has a cloze (fill-in-the-blank) format with one or two sentences. Strong picture support is provided, and high-frequency English, short sentences, and simple language structures are used. This type of question is developed at all grades to assess the beginning and intermediate levels.
<b>PLDs</b>	(B) (i), (iii), (iv) Intermediate ELLs read and understand vocabulary on a somewhat wider range of topics, including everyday oral language and routine academic language. They have a growing understanding of basic language structures, understand short, connected sentences, and depend on visual support to sustain comprehension.

## Responding to Questions About Pictures

### Grades 4–5 Beginning



What is the teacher doing?

- The teacher has chalk.
- There are three students.
- The students are working
- The teacher is writing.

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 - Demonstrate basic understanding of a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(G) Demonstrate comprehension of increasingly complex English by responding to questions
<b>Description</b>	This question type requires the EL to answer a basic question about a picture. Short sentences featuring simple language structures and high-frequency words are used. These questions measure comprehension of the kinds of questions that students at the assessed proficiency level can read and understand. The question type is developed for the intermediate level at grade 2 and the beginning level at other grades.
<b>PLDs</b>	(A) (i), (iii), (iv), (v) Beginning ELLs read and understand some very high-frequency words and some sentences in highly routine contexts or recently practiced, highly familiar text. They have a very limited sense of English language structures and are highly dependent on visuals to derive meaning from text in English.

## Subject-Area Cloze Questions—Science

### Grades 8–9 Advanced High

Wendy was riding in a car. The driver stopped the car suddenly, and Wendy jerked forward until she was caught by her seat belt. Wendy realized that this was an example of Newton’s first law of motion. After the car stopped \_\_\_\_\_, Wendy continued moving forward because of inertia.

- specifically
- positively
- narrowly
- abruptly



<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Understand words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English
<b>SE</b>	(F) Use contextual support to read grade-appropriate content area text and develop grasp of language structures to comprehend increasingly challenging language.
<b>Description</b>	This cloze format requires the EL to read content-based English text consisting of several sentences. Mathematics and science contexts are most often used. The student is not expected to perform or have mastered a content-based skill. The student uses academic English vocabulary and language structures to select the word that best fits the context. This question type is primarily developed for the advanced and advanced high levels.
<b>PLDs</b>	(D) (i), (iii) Advanced high ELLs are able to read and understand vocabulary at a level nearly comparable to their native English-speaking peers, and they are able to use their familiarity with English language structures to construct meaning of grade-appropriate text.

## Narrative Selection, Grade 3, Intermediate

Intermediate level students can read short reading passages that feature simple sentences and highly familiar English, but they are dependent on visual cues and story predictability to sustain comprehension. As compared to beginners, intermediate students are able to read and understand English vocabulary on a wider range of topics and with increased depth. The topic of this passage is familiar. The illustration supports one of the story's main events. Narrative passages with appropriate linguistic supports are developed to assess all proficiency levels.

### A Day with Dad



- 1 Joe's dad works on Saturdays. He is a bus driver.
- 2 One day Dad says, "Would you like to come to work with me on Saturday?"
- 3 "Yes!" Joe says happily as he jumps up and down.
- 4 On Saturday Joe and Dad go to the bus station. Joe finds a seat on the bus and sits down. All day Dad drives back and forth across the city. He drives to the park, to the mall, and to the library.
- 5 Joe's dad smiles and says hello to everyone who gets on the bus. At one stop a woman with a cane gets on the bus. Joe's dad waits until the woman sits down. Then he drives on.
- 6 At the end of the day, Joe's dad returns the bus to the station. Then they go home. It has been a long day, but Joe was happy to see how his dad helps people.

Where do Joe and his dad get on the bus?

- At the library
- At the park
- At the mall
- At the station

What is this story mostly about?

- Joe helps a woman get on the bus.
- Joe goes to work with his dad.
- Joe plays with his dad on Saturday.
- Joe learns how to drive a bus.

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Basic understanding of a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(I) Employ basic reading skills to understand supporting details and to distinguish main ideas from details commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	The first question measures the ability to understand a supporting detail of the story. The second question measures the ability to distinguish the main idea of the story from details. The questions use everyday language that intermediate students can understand.
<b>PLDs</b>	(B) (vi) Intermediate ELLs are able to apply basic comprehension skills when reading texts that are linguistically accommodated and/or simplified for this proficiency level.

You can tell from this story that Joe’s dad is —

- lazy
- brave
- funny
- kind

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(J) Employ inferential skills such as drawing inferences from text
<b>Description</b>	This question measures the student’s ability to analyze the story to determine that the character of Joe’s dad is best described as kind.
<b>PLDs</b>	(B) (vi) Intermediate ELLs are able to apply some higher-order comprehension skills when reading texts that are linguistically accommodated and/or simplified for this proficiency level.



## Informational Selection, Grade 2, Advanced

Informational texts are mainly written for the advanced and advanced high proficiency levels. This text is science-related. At the advanced level, ELs demonstrate the ability to read about unfamiliar topics at a grade-appropriate level when suitable linguistic supports are included.

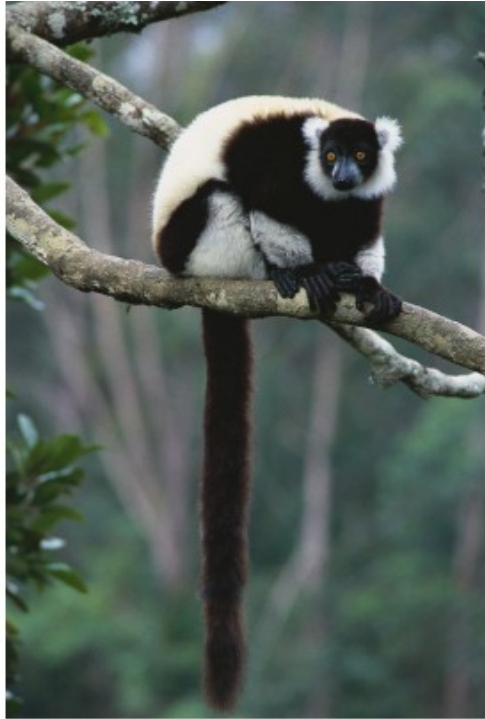


**1** Lemurs are interesting animals. They come from only one place in the world. That place is Madagascar, a big island next to Africa.



**2** Lemurs can be different sizes. The smallest lemur is the size of a mouse. The largest lemur is about the size of a large house cat.

**3** Most lemurs live in trees. Their hands and feet help them grab tree branches. Lemurs have long, strong toes on their feet and thumbs on their hands. Most lemurs also have a long, furry tail. Their tail helps them balance so they do not fall off tree branches. Lemurs jump from tree to tree looking for food. They eat mostly flowers, leaves, and fruit.



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4 Some mother lemurs carry their babies in their mouth when they are very small. Most lemur babies ride on their mother’s back when they are old enough to cling to her fur with their hands.

Some lemurs can be the size of a —

- butterfly
- house cat
- pig
- giraffe

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Basic understanding of a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(I) Employ basic reading skills to understand supporting details commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question measures the ability to read and understand important details in a content-based text.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply basic comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

In paragraph 3, which words best help the reader understand what balance means?

- live in trees*
- looking for food*
- jump from tree to tree*
- so they do not fall*

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Understand words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English
<b>SE</b>	(F) Use contextual support to read grade-appropriate content area text
<b>Description</b>	In this question the EL uses the textual cue “so they do not fall” as context for understanding the meaning of the English word “balance.” Textual cues are written to be comprehensible to students at the targeted proficiency level. Visual and textual cues help ELs broaden their bank of English vocabulary and confirm the meaning of words they find difficult to sound out.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (i), (iii), (iv) Advanced ELLs read and understand, with second language acquisition support, a variety of grade-appropriate English vocabulary in academic contexts and use their growing familiarity with English language structures to construct meaning of grade-appropriate text. They can apply basic comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

Lemurs are like people because they —

- live mostly in trees
- carry babies in their mouth
- have thumbs on their hands
- have long tails

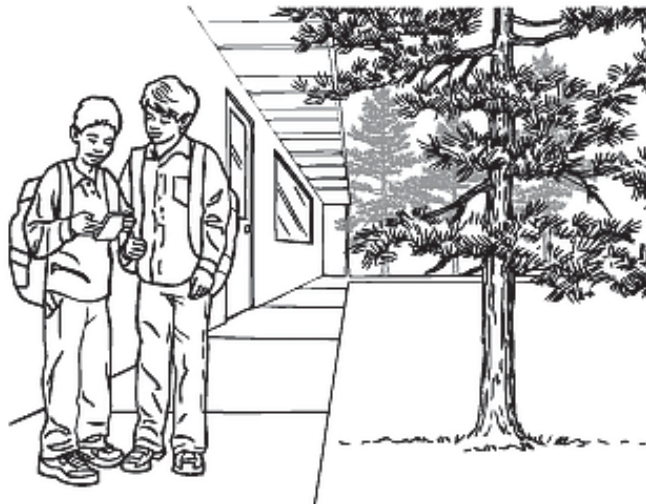
<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(J) Employ inferential skills such as drawing conclusions from text
<b>Description</b>	This question measures the ability of the students to move beyond basic comprehension of content-based text to think inferentially about what they have read.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

## Narrative Selection, Grade 3, Advanced

This story is relayed using fairly noncomplex text and at first glance may appear to be accessible to intermediate ELs. However, the story has a surprise twist. Advanced level ELs have enough command of English to follow unpredictable story lines in noncomplex text, enabling them to read beyond the lines of the text to make implicit connections. Intermediate ELs, by contrast, rely on familiar and predictable story lines as a road map to derive and confirm meaning when they engage in independent reading tasks.

### What William Found

- 1 William and Caleb looked at magazines in the library. "There it is!" William said, pointing to a picture. "That's the game I want."
- 2 "Cool," said Caleb. "But it costs \$20. That's a lot of money."
- 3 "I'm trying to save money," William said. He took some coins out of his pocket. "I have \$0.85 so far. I need to save a lot more to get \$20."
- 4 The friends checked out some books and went outside. In front of the library, William stopped to tie his shoe. As he bent down, he noticed something brown at the base of a nearby tree. At first William thought the brown thing was an animal. Then he saw that it was a wallet.
- 5 William picked up the wallet. "Look what I found," he said.
- 6 "It's your lucky day!" said Caleb. "I'll bet there's money in it. Open it."



**7** “I don’t know,” William said slowly. He hesitated. He looked around. No one else was in front of the library. William didn’t feel good about opening the wallet. He turned it over. The wallet was made of brown leather and was stuffed full of something. Maybe it was full of money.

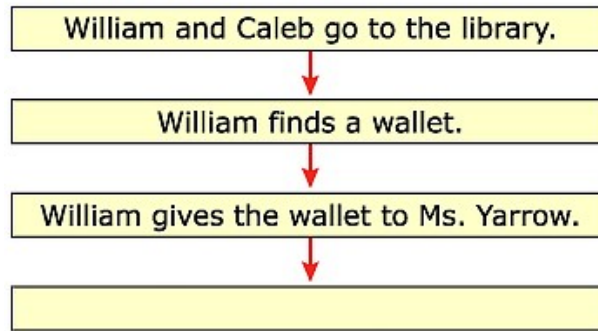
**8** “Let’s look inside and see how much money is in it,” Caleb said. “Think of all the things you could buy. You could get that game you want!”

**9** William stood quietly holding the wallet. He looked around again. No one was looking for a lost object.

**10** William didn’t open the wallet. Instead he walked back into the library. William told the librarian about the wallet. Ms. Yarrow took the wallet, thanked William, and said she would try to find the owner.

**11** The next morning the phone rang at William’s house. It was Ms. Yarrow. “William,” she said, “Mr. Chang was so happy that you found his lost wallet. Mr. Chang is glad that you decided not to keep the wallet and the money inside of it. He wants to give you a reward for being honest. Please come to the library. I have \$20 for you. The money is your reward.”

Read the diagram below.



Which of these belongs in the empty box?

- William and Caleb check out books from the library.
- Caleb tells William to open the wallet.
- William gets a reward.
- William ties his shoe.

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(K) Employ analytical skills commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question measures the ability of students to evaluate the graphic and use their understanding of the sequence of events in the story to fill in the empty box.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

Which of these is the best summary of the story?

- William finds a wallet. He decides not to keep it. The owner of the wallet gives William a reward.
- William and his friend go to the library. They look at magazines. Then they check out books.
- William finds a brown wallet. He wonders what is inside the wallet.
- William needs \$20 to buy a game. Mr. Chang gives him the money.

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Basic understanding of a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(I) Employ basic reading skills to summarize text commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question measures the ability to understand what the story is generally about and provides evidence of whether the EL has reached the advanced level of English reading proficiency.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply basic comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

Based on the story, which of these will William probably do with the reward money?

- He will buy a new wallet.
- He will give it to Ms. Yarrow.
- He will buy the game he wants.
- He will give it to Caleb.

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(J) Employ inferential skills such as predicting commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question measures whether the student understands the story. A thorough understanding is required to understand that William chose to be honest rather than take money from the wallet he found to buy the game he wanted.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

Which word best describes William in this story?

- Honest
- Funny
- Careless
- Relaxed

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(J) Employ inferential skills such as drawing conclusions from text
<b>Description</b>	This question measures the student's ability to analyze the story to determine that the character is best described as honest.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.



## Narrative Selection, Grades 10–12, Advanced High

The language complexity in this advanced high passage is similar to that of grade-level materials. The way ELs answer comprehension questions about these types of literary texts provides evidence of their reading vocabulary level and overall ability to independently synthesize the meaning of the English they encounter in high school English reading passages.

### The Boatman

*The boatmen of New England in the 1930s earned their living on the rough waters of the Atlantic Ocean. They often had to work in stormy conditions, catching fish and then hauling them toward the lights and safety of their home port.*

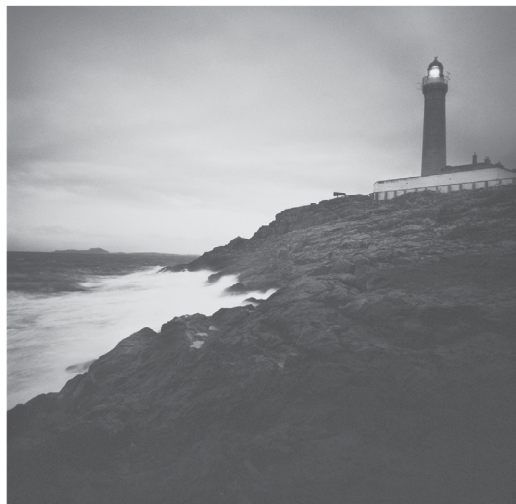
- 1 Changes in light, like the sun rising, wake some people. Sounds wake others.
- 2 For the boatman, it was certain smells. The aromas of fresh-brewed coffee, strong and black, and fresh ham sizzling on the griddle were more than enough to rouse him from his bed at home. Perhaps that was why it was usually so hard for him to crawl out of the tiny bed on his fishing boat, the *Eloise*. Out here on the open water, he was alone. There was no one to prepare a breakfast feast for him. He would have to wait until he was back home.
- 3 On this particular day, it was neither smells nor changes in light that woke the boatman. It was the seagulls. Their shrieks and cries pierced his sleep like a sewing needle through cloth. He peered through the small round window near his head. The fog on the water was separating into strands of cloud, rotating in elegant, wispy columns off the surface and eventually vanishing into the blue air above. Through the fog, he saw the seagulls that had served as his alarm clock. He heard small waves slapping against the anchored boat as the morning tide rolled past. The boatman rose stiffly from the little bed, his old bones creaking and cracking like the wood used to build the *Eloise* a long time ago.
- 4 He took out an ancient coffeepot and dumped ground coffee into its metal basket. Then he filled the pot and set it on the small gas burner he used to warm his meals. The boatman checked his watch and then the barometer on the cabin wall. The barometric pressure had dropped a little since last night. "Probably a storm is coming," he thought as he started the engine. It sputtered and then settled into a steady hum. The boatman, who prided himself on keeping his boat in good shape, smiled and thought, "Ah, that's my *Eloise*. I can always count on her."

5 The change in weather meant a change in plans for the boatman. Instead of turning east and heading out to sea another 10 miles, he decided to head north a mile before sailing westward toward home. With luck, he would be able to catch two hundred pounds of fish before going back to the port. He pulled up the anchor and bent down to gather his big net. Struggling a little with its weight, he threw it over the side of the boat and watched it unroll in the green-gray water. Then he grabbed the wheel and gradually increased the boat's speed, going toward a place in the ocean he knew was deep and full of fish.

6 The sun had burned off the remaining fog, and the sky to the north and east was bright blue. But off to the west, the boatman saw a line of heavy gray clouds growing on the horizon. Thirty minutes was all the time he could spend fishing these waters before heading home. The boat slowed down as the net filled. Finally the boatman turned off the engine so he could get the net out of the water. He turned on the electric winch and watched as it pulled the net out of the water and lowered it onto the deck. It was full of fish. He hurried to open a door on the boat's floor, revealing a snowy bed of crushed ice in the space below. The net released a shower of fish onto the ice. "Around 350 pounds," he said out loud as he closed and locked the door. Not a bad catch for a short morning.

7 By now the wind was stronger, and the waves were bigger. The gray line of clouds had moved closer. The boatman opened his locker and pulled out his heavy yellow raincoat. He returned to the wheel and slowly turned the vessel into the approaching storm toward home. The wind was steady, a good sign, but the sky ahead was heavy and dark with rain.

8 There were three miles between the *Eloise* and the lighthouse at Leary's Point. On a clear day the boatman would have seen the rocky outline of the point's shoreline, but not today. Today he squinted into sheets of rain, searching for the lighthouse beacon that had guided so many of his ancestors past the rocks of the cove to safety. Huge drops splattered against the sides of the cabin windows. The boatman was alone in a world of water.



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- 9 He gripped the wheel and thought of his wife at home, anxiously watching the storm and fretting. He thought of her calling the harbormaster, asking what boats had come ashore. And he thought of her running through the rain, shaking from both the cold and concern, and then climbing the stairs of the lighthouse to check the light. He knew the light would be there because he knew his wife. His Eloise was constant and true.
- 10 The rain was coming down so heavily now that it was impossible to tell where the sea ended and the sky began. The boatman gripped the wheel, checking his course. According to the channel markers, he was only half a mile from Leary’s Point. To his left he saw one flash of lightning and then another. A shiver of dread ran down his spine. But a moment later he realized that it was the lighthouse beacon, not lightning, that was interrupting the grayness.
- 11 The boatman smiled as he turned his boat toward the beam. “Ah, that’s my Eloise,” he thought. “I can always count on her.”

When the boatman first sees the light of the lighthouse, what does he think it is?

- Flashes of lightning
- A light from another boat
- A change in light from the sun
- Lights from the port

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Basic understanding of a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(I) Employ basic reading skills to demonstrate understanding of supporting details in text commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question measures whether the student understands supporting details of the text’s main idea.
<b>PLDs</b>	(D) (iv) Advanced high ELLs are able to apply, with minimal second language acquisition support and at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers, basic comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text.

In paragraph 2, what does rouse mean?

- Surprise
- Interrupt
- Awaken
- Bother

<b>Reporting Category</b>	1 – Understand words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English
<b>SE</b>	(F) Use contextual support to read grade-appropriate content area text
<b>Description</b>	This question requires the student to use contextual cues in paragraphs 1 and 2 to understand the meaning of “rouse.”
<b>PLDs</b>	(D) (i) Advanced high ELLs read and understand vocabulary at a level nearly comparable to their native English-speaking peers, with some exceptions when low-frequency or specialized vocabulary is used.

What is the significance of the boat’s name?

- The boat is named after the boatman’s wife because, like her, it is reliable and trustworthy. -
- The boatman would only marry a woman who had the same name as his boat.
- It is good luck for a boatman to name his boat after his wife.
- The boatman had always liked the name Eloise.

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(K) Employ analytical skills commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question assesses the ability to read analytically and beyond a basic understanding of a text to a deeper, more complete understanding of ideas and themes conveyed in literary texts.
<b>PLDs</b>	(D) (iv) Advanced high ELLs are able to apply, with minimal second language acquisition support and at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers, higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text.

The setting is critical to this story because —

- the central conflict and plot are determined by the character's surroundings
- the main characters could have existed only during the early twentieth century
- the plot centers on several true historical events mentioned in the story
- some of the sights and sounds of the sea are used to illustrate the theme

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 - Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(K) Employ analytical skills commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question requires the student to evaluate the relevance of the selection's setting. Correct answers to this question provide evidence of the student's ability to synthesize the overall meaning of high school texts in order to exercise higher-order reading comprehension skills. The answer choices contain academic language used routinely during language arts instruction.
<b>PLDs</b>	(D) (iv) Advanced high ELLs are able to apply, with minimal second language acquisition support and at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers, higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text.

## Narrative Selection, Grade 2, Advanced High

This advanced high narrative incorporates the real-life application of a mathematics skill, the addition of two-digit numbers. In these types of selections, students are not assessed on their mastery of content-based skills but on the practical ability to think and reason using academic English during grade-appropriate subject-area instruction.

### When Do People Go to the Zoo?

- 1 When Ms. Medina's students walked into their classroom Monday morning, they noticed something different. Ms. Medina had drawn a large calendar on the board. The students sat down and waited to begin the math lesson.
- 2 Ms. Medina said, "This calendar shows the attendance at the Parkland Zoo last month. Each day of the week has a circle with a number inside it. That number tells us how many people went to the zoo that day."

March						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Zoo closed	2 57	3 62	4 99	5 74	6 80	7 310
8 Zoo closed	9 164	10 189	11 214	12 172	13 143	14 412
15 Zoo closed	16 68	17 105	18 92	19 81	20 73	21 327
22 Zoo closed	23 72	24 66	25 93	26 51	27 84	28 384
29 Zoo closed	30 86	31 73				

- 3 Ms. Medina continued, "Please look at the first week on the calendar. What day of the week was March 2?"
- 4 "Monday," Olivia answered.
- 5 "Right," said Ms. Medina. "How many people went to the zoo that day?"

- 6** Lyle said, "I see that 57 people went to the zoo that day."
- 7** "Right again," said Ms. Medina. "Now let's look at March 7. What day of the week was that? How many people visited the zoo?"
- 8** "That day was a Saturday, and there were 310 people at the zoo," replied Ava.
- 9** "Correct," said Ms. Medina. "Which day had the higher attendance, March 2 or March 7?"
- 10** Phan said, "More people went to the zoo on March 7, because 310 is greater than 57."
- 11** "Yes," said Ms. Medina. "Why do you think that more people went to the zoo on Saturday than on Monday?"
- 12** Lyle answered, "Well, there is no school on Saturday, so maybe more people could go to the zoo that day."
- 13** "Great thinking," said Ms. Medina. "Now look at the other weeks on the calendar. Do you see a pattern?"
- 14** Olivia said, "The numbers on Saturdays are greater than the numbers on other days of the week. The pattern is that more people went to the zoo on Saturdays than on any other day."
- 15** "Yes, the zoo was busiest on Saturdays," Ms. Medina said. "What else do you notice about the numbers in the calendar?"
- 16** Phan frowned and said, "Look at the second week in March. The attendance number is greater than 100 each day that week. Why?"
- 17** The class was silent. Then Ava said, "Oh! I think I know! That week was Spring Break! Kids did not have to go to school. I suppose a lot of people went to the zoo, maybe because they had more free time."

**18** Lyle asked, “What about March 17? It was a Tuesday, and 105 people went to the zoo. Why did so many people go on that day?”

**19** “Good question,” Ms. Medina replied. “On March 17 the Parkland Zoo sold tickets at a discount. A zoo ticket cost \$2 less than the normal price. People probably decided to visit the zoo on that day because they could pay less money.”

**20** Then Ms. Medina said, “Everyone has done a good job understanding the information on the calendar. Now I have one more thing to share. We will visit the Parkland Zoo next Wednesday on our field trip!”

**21** “Wow!” said Lyle. “I bet attendance will be really high that day!”

Attendance numbers at the zoo are higher on Saturdays because —

- people can see more animals
- zoo tickets cost less on Saturdays
- children do not have to go to school
- the zoo stays open later on Saturdays

The calendar on the board in Ms. Medina’s classroom shows the —

- number of visitors at the zoo on different days
- date of the class field trip to the zoo
- amount of money the zoo earned
- attendance of students in Ms. Medina’s class

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Basic understanding of variety of texts written in English
<b>SE</b>	(I) Employ basic reading skills such as demonstrating understanding of supporting ideas and details in text commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	The first question measures whether the student understands supporting details of the text’s main idea. The second question measures whether the student understands important details from the text and graphic provided.
<b>PLDs</b>	(D) (iv) Advanced high ELLs are able to apply, with minimal second language acquisition support and at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers, basic and higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text.



You can tell from the story that the students in Ms. Medina’s class —

- enjoy making calendars
- visit the zoo often
- know how to read a calendar
- want to study zoo animals

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE*</b>	(K) Employ analytical skills commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question requires the student to read English with minimal difficulty to gain a thorough understanding of grade-appropriate text. The question requires the student to analyze events in the story and draw a conclusion.
<b>PLDs**</b>	(D) (iv) Advanced high ELLs are able to apply, with minimal second language acquisition support and at a level nearly comparable to native English-speaking peers, higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text.

\* ELPS student expectation (SE)

\*\* ELPS proficiency level descriptors (PLDs)

## Informational Selection, Grades 8–9, Advanced

In this advanced selection, the EL reads about the green anaconda. This type of selection is not designed to assess mastery of science concepts or skills, but the ability to think and reason using academic English when reading and learning in grade-level science contexts. Advanced selections provide linguistically accommodated text features appropriate for this English language proficiency level.

### The Green Anaconda

**1** Are you thinking about getting a pet snake? Don't put the green anaconda on your list! Your home is not big enough or wet enough for an anaconda. The green anaconda is the world's largest snake. This massive creature can grow as long as 30 feet. It can weigh up to 550 pounds and be 12 inches around.



#### Habitat

**2** Green anacondas live in swamps and rivers in South American rain forests. They are excellent swimmers, and they spend most of their time in the water. Anacondas cannot move around easily on land. However, the snakes will sometimes lie on rocks or tree branches in the sun.

**3** The green anaconda is active at night and sleeps during the day. It lives alone and comes together with other anacondas only during mating season.

## Diet

**4** In some parts of the world, the anaconda is called “elephant killer.” Early Spanish settlers in South America called it *matatoro*, which means “bull killer.” However, the green anaconda does not eat elephants or bulls. It eats turtles, birds, pigs, and deer.

**5** The anaconda is an excellent hunter. The snake’s nose and eyes are on the top of its head. This enables the anaconda to hide just under the water’s surface. The anaconda waits under the surface for its prey to come near the water. Then it grabs its victim. The snake coils its strong body around the prey and squeezes until the animal stops breathing. Then the anaconda opens its jaws and works the prey into its mouth. The snake’s jaws stretch wide enough to swallow the prey whole. Strong muscles crush the animal and push it down into the snake’s stomach. It can take weeks and sometimes months for the anaconda to digest its food.



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## Young

**6** Green anacondas give birth to live young, as opposed to many other snakes, which lay eggs. The female has about 20 to 30 babies at one time. After giving birth, the mother’s job is finished. The baby snakes know right away how to hunt for food and take care of themselves.

## Predators

**7** Jaguars and large reptiles eat young anacondas. However, humans are the anaconda's most dangerous predator. Some people hunt anacondas for their skins. Others capture the snakes to sell illegally as pets. People who live in the rain forests sometimes kill anacondas because they want to protect themselves and their animals.

**8** There are many stories and myths that tell of anaconda attacks. The snake's huge size might be a reason for some of the fantastic snake tales. Regardless of the stories and myths, it is probably best to view the snake in a book or in a zoo.

What is paragraph 5 mostly about?

- How the anaconda's jaws work
- What the anaconda eats
- Where the anaconda waits for prey
- How the anaconda captures food

<b>Reporting Category</b>	2 – Basic understanding of a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(I) Employ basic reading skills to demonstrate understanding of supporting and main ideas in text commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question assesses understanding of sufficient English to determine the main idea of a paragraph.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply basic comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features in order to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

Which paragraph gives information about the kinds of animals that hunt anacondas?

- Paragraph 5
- Paragraph 6
- Paragraph 7
- Paragraph 8

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(K) Employ analytical skills commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question requires the student to analyze the passage and its main ideas. This question type does not measure mastery of science but the extent to which the EL has acquired the ability to read academic English and analyze information during grade-appropriate subject-area instruction.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features in order to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

The anaconda has been called “elephant killer” and “bull killer” probably because —

- it is the same size as an elephant
- it can kill and eat large animals
- it kills and eats elephants and bulls
- it lives in South American rain forests

<b>Reporting Category</b>	3 – Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts
<b>SE</b>	(J) Employ inferential skills commensurate with content area needs
<b>Description</b>	This question requires the EL to demonstrate the ability to think inferentially when reading classroom-based science materials that have some linguistically supportive text features. The question provides information about the growing ability of ELs to read and think analytically during their own science instruction.
<b>PLDs</b>	(C) (iv) Advanced ELLs are able to apply higher-order comprehension skills when reading grade-appropriate text but are occasionally dependent on visuals and other linguistically accommodated text features in order to determine or clarify meaning, particularly with unfamiliar topics.

## Practice Tests and Released Tests

Several TELPAS online resources related to the reading tests are available on the [TELPAS Resources](#) webpage.

- **[Practice Sets](#)**

The TELPAS reading practice sets include a sampling of reading passages and test questions. The purpose of the practice sets is to familiarize students with the online interface, the available tools, and the types of test items. These practice sets should not be used for diagnostic purposes.

- **[2017, 2018, and 2020 Released TELPAS Reading Tests for Grades 2-12](#)**

These released tests can be administered to students for diagnostic purposes. The Student Practice Site does not provide a complete score. If you would like to find a student's score on the released test, you should direct the student to record his or her answers on a sheet of paper. Then you can use the answer key provided to score the released test. To determine a student's proficiency level rating, refer to the raw score conversion tables on the [TELPAS Raw Score Conversion Tables](#) webpage.

## TELPAS Writing, Grades 2-12

English language proficiency in writing is defined for TELPAS as the ability to produce written text with content and format to fulfill grade-appropriate classroom assignments. The definition relates specifically to the communication skills that an EL needs in order to use English as an effective medium for academic instruction.

As described in the section on developing and assessing English proficiency, the TELPAS grades 2-12 writing assessments comprise performance-based student writing collections holistically rated by trained raters. Though TELPAS is administered in the spring, teachers use the holistic assessment process in informative ways throughout the year to identify and respond to the needs their ELs have related to learning to express themselves clearly in English.

In the spring, teachers assemble writing assignments from routine instruction to form TELPAS writing collections. The assembly requirements are outlined below. Trained TELPAS raters use the writing PLDs for grades 2-12 to rate the English language proficiency exhibited in the writing collections.

## TELPAS Writing Collections

The assignments in TELPAS writing collections are taken from authentic, performance-based classroom instruction that is grounded in the subject-area TEKS and ELPS student expectations. Below are some eligible types of writing assignments. This list is not exhaustive.

### Types of Grades 2–12 Writing Assignments

- descriptive writing on a familiar topic
- writing about a familiar process
- narrative writing about a past event
- reflective writing
- extended writing from language arts classes
- expository or procedural writing from science, mathematics, and social studies classes

TELPAS writing collections are required to contain at least five writing assignments, including

- at least one assignment that elicits the use of past tense, and
- at least two writing assignments from the mathematics, science, or social studies subject-areas.

Writing samples that best portray the overall English language proficiency of the student are chosen for the collection. The included samples show how clearly and extensively the student is able to express thoughts, ideas, and information in English to complete writing assignments in core subject-areas. Short-answer writing assignments are not appropriate for the collections. More information about the assembly of TELPAS writing collections can be found in the *TELPAS Rater Manual* and the training presentation titled *Grades 2–12 Writing Collection Overview* on the [TELPAS Resources](#) webpage.

## ELPS Student Expectations and PLDs

### ELPS Student Expectations for Writing 2–12, 19 TAC 74.4(c)(5)

- (5) **Cross-curricular second language acquisition/writing.** The ELL writes in a variety of forms with increasing accuracy to effectively address a specific purpose and audience in all content areas. ELLs may be at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition in writing. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student’s level of English language proficiency. The student is expected to:
- (A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing in English;
  - (B) write using newly acquired basic vocabulary and content-based grade-level vocabulary;
  - (C) spell familiar English words with increasing accuracy, and employ English spelling patterns and rules with increasing accuracy as more English is acquired;
  - (D) edit writing for standard grammar and usage, including subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and appropriate verb tenses commensurate with grade-level expectations as more English is acquired;
  - (E) employ increasingly complex grammatical structures in content area writing commensurate with grade-level expectations, such as:
    - (i) using correct verbs, tenses, and pronouns/antecedents;
    - (ii) using possessive case (apostrophe s) correctly; and
    - (iii) using negatives and contractions correctly.
  - (F) write using a variety of grade-appropriate sentence lengths, patterns, and connecting words to combine phrases, clauses, and sentences in increasingly accurate ways as more English is acquired; and
  - (G) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail to fulfill content area writing needs as more English is acquired.



## ELPS–TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors, 19 TAC 74.4(d)(6) Grades 2–12 Writing

BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
<p><b>(A) Beginning ELLs lack the English vocabulary and grasp of English language structures necessary to address grade-appropriate writing tasks meaningfully.</b></p>	<p><b>(B) Intermediate ELLs have enough English vocabulary and enough grasp of English language structures to address grade-appropriate writing tasks in a limited way.</b></p>	<p><b>(C) Advanced ELLs have enough English vocabulary and command of English language structures to address grade-appropriate writing tasks, although second language acquisition support is needed.</b></p>	<p><b>(D) Advanced high ELLs have acquired the English vocabulary and command of English language structures necessary to address grade-appropriate writing tasks with minimal second language acquisition support.</b></p>
<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> have little or no ability to use the English language to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> lack the English necessary to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing such as focus and coherence, conventions, organization, voice, and development of ideas in English</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> exhibit writing features typical at this level, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> ability to label, list, and copy</li> <li><b>(II)</b> high-frequency words/phrases and short, simple sentences (or even short paragraphs) based primarily on recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar material; this type of writing may be quite accurate</li> <li><b>(III)</b> present tense used primarily</li> <li><b>(IV)</b> frequent primary language features (spelling patterns, word order, literal translations, and words from the student's primary language) and other errors associated with second language acquisition may significantly hinder or prevent understanding, even for individuals accustomed to the writing of ELLs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> have a limited ability to use the English language to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> are limited in their ability to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing in English; communicate best when topics are highly familiar and concrete, and require simple, high-frequency English</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> exhibit writing features typical at this level, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> simple, original messages consisting of short, simple sentences; frequent inaccuracies occur when creating or taking risks beyond familiar English</li> <li><b>(II)</b> high-frequency vocabulary; academic writing often has an oral tone</li> <li><b>(III)</b> loosely connected text with limited use of cohesive devices or repetitive use, which may cause gaps in meaning</li> <li><b>(IV)</b> repetition of ideas due to lack of vocabulary and language structures</li> <li><b>(V)</b> present tense used most accurately; simple future and past tenses, if attempted, are used inconsistently or with frequent inaccuracies</li> <li><b>(VI)</b> undetailed descriptions, explanations, and narrations; difficulty expressing abstract ideas</li> <li><b>(VII)</b> primary language features and errors associated with second language acquisition may be frequent</li> <li><b>(VIII)</b> some writing may be understood only by individuals accustomed to the writing of ELLs; parts of the writing may be hard to understand even for individuals accustomed to ELL writing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to use the English language, with second language acquisition support, to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> know enough English to be able to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing in English, although second language acquisition support is particularly needed when topics are abstract, academically challenging, or unfamiliar</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> exhibit writing features typical at this level, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> grasp of basic verbs, tenses, grammar features, and sentence patterns; partial grasp of more complex verbs, tenses, grammar features, and sentence patterns</li> <li><b>(II)</b> emerging grade-appropriate vocabulary; academic writing has a more academic tone</li> <li><b>(III)</b> use of a variety of common cohesive devices, although some redundancy may occur</li> <li><b>(IV)</b> narrations, explanations, and descriptions developed in some detail with emerging clarity; quality or quantity declines when abstract ideas are expressed, academic demands are high, or low-frequency vocabulary is required</li> <li><b>(V)</b> occasional second language acquisition errors</li> <li><b>(VI)</b> communications are usually understood by individuals not accustomed to the writing of ELLs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>These students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to use the English language, with minimal second language acquisition support, to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> know enough English to be able to develop or demonstrate, with minimal second language acquisition support, elements of grade-appropriate writing in English</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> exhibit writing features typical at this level, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> nearly comparable to writing of native English-speaking peers in clarity and precision with regard to English vocabulary and language structures, with occasional exceptions when writing about academically complex ideas, abstract ideas, or topics requiring low-frequency vocabulary</li> <li><b>(II)</b> occasional difficulty with naturalness of phrasing and expression</li> <li><b>(III)</b> errors associated with second language acquisition are minor and usually limited to low-frequency words and structures; errors rarely interfere with communication</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

As shown in the PLDs, the summary statement and descriptors for each proficiency level form a student profile. When rating students, raters are directed to read the proficiency levels as a whole and determine the level that best describes the student’s current overall writing proficiency in English. For students who are in the early or late stages of a proficiency level, raters are directed to determine the level at which the students perform most consistently.

The top two descriptors address the following major elements. Typical writing features associated with each proficiency level are also shown.

<b>1st descriptor</b>	Ability to use English to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in subject-area instruction
<b>2nd descriptor</b>	Ability to use English to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing in English (e.g., focus and coherence, conventions, organization, voice, and development of ideas)

During rater training, participants engage in guided and independent practice activities in which they use the PLDs to evaluate authentic student writing samples. In subsequent calibration sets, they independently rate student writing collections in preparation for applying the rubrics consistently and accurately during the TELPAS administration.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment Examples

The following writing of ELs illustrates the direct alignment between TELPAS and the ELPS. Each example links to the writing of a student. The students address the [Types of Grades 2-12 Writing Assignments](#) list.

Giving students, whether they are ELs or not, frequent, meaningful writing assignments across curriculum areas develops critical reasoning skills, language arts skills, and other subject-matter knowledge and skills. This practice has the added benefit of helping ELs internalize, get feedback on, and perfect the new English vocabulary and language structures they are in the process of acquiring.

ELs have the opportunity to address all ELPS student expectations for writing when they engage in assignments that require them to write in order to fulfill the purposes of subject-area instruction. Teachers who incorporate the ELPS student expectations effectively in instruction attend not only to the subject-matter development of the student but also to the student’s learning of the vocabulary, structures, and mechanics of the English language. For formative and summative assessment purposes, the PLDs are used to evaluate where on the English language proficiency continuum the student is in acquiring the ability to use English vocabulary and language structures to address grade-appropriate writing tasks.

## Writing Example 1: Extended Writing on a Topic from Language Arts, Grade 2



[CLICK HERE](#) to see a writing assignment from an EL at the advanced high level of English language writing proficiency. The student describes things that are important to have on a camping trip.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

Extended writing assignments such as these develop and help show the ability of ELs to express themselves clearly on grade-level language arts topics. This is one of several writing samples the teacher of this student included in his TELPAS writing collection to portray his overall English language writing proficiency.

### ELPS-TELPAS Alignment

This writing sample shows the alignment between the ELPS and TELPAS. The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed are shown on the following page.

## ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT

Student Expectations 19 TAC §74.4(c)(5)	Proficiency Level Descriptors 19 TAC §74.4(d)(6)
<p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <p><b>(A)</b> learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing in English</p> <p><b>(B)</b> write using newly acquired basic vocabulary and content-based grade-level vocabulary</p> <p><b>(C)</b> spell familiar English words with increasing accuracy, and employ English spelling patterns and rules with increasing accuracy as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(D)</b> edit writing for standard grammar and usage, including subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and appropriate verb tenses commensurate with grade-level expectations as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(E)</b> employ increasingly complex grammatical structures in content area writing commensurate with grade-level expectations, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> using correct verbs, tenses, and pronouns/antecedents</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> using possessive case (apostrophe s) correctly</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> using negatives and contractions correctly</li> </ul> <p><b>(F)</b> write using a variety of grade-appropriate sentence lengths, patterns, and connecting words to combine phrases, clauses, and sentences in increasingly accurate ways as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(G)</b> narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail to fulfill content area writing needs as more English is acquired</p>	<p><b>(D)</b> Advanced high ELLs have acquired the English vocabulary and command of English language structures necessary to address grade-appropriate writing tasks with minimal second language acquisition support. These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> are able to use the English language, with minimal second language acquisition support, to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> know enough English to be able to develop or demonstrate, with minimal second language acquisition support, elements of grade-appropriate writing in English</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> exhibit writing features typical at this level, including             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(I)</b> nearly comparable to writing of native English-speaking peers in clarity and precision with regard to English vocabulary and language structures, with occasional exceptions when writing about academically complex ideas, abstract ideas, or topics requiring low-frequency vocabulary</li> <li><b>(II)</b> occasional difficulty with naturalness of phrasing and expression</li> <li><b>(III)</b> errors associated with second language acquisition are minor and usually limited to low-frequency words and structures; errors made rarely interfere with communication</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.

## Writing Example 2: Expository Writing from Science Subject-Area, Grade 10



[CLICK HERE](#) to see a writing assignment from an EL at the advanced level of English language writing proficiency about why science is important in our lives.

### Benefit to Teaching and Learning

Writing in core subject-areas such as mathematics, science, and social studies supports both the content attainment and English language acquisition of ELs. Using recently encountered vocabulary and content in a written format helps ELs internalize what they have been taught. Teachers benefit from the ability to evaluate both subject-area learning and English language writing proficiency. TELPAS writing collections include writing tasks from a variety of

disciplines in order to portray the students’ overall ability to use English to engage meaningfully in grade-level instruction.

## ELPS-TELPAS Alignment

This writing sample shows the alignment between the ELPS and TELPAS. The ELPS student expectations and proficiency level descriptors addressed are shown on the following page.

ELPS-TELPAS ALIGNMENT	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Student Expectations</b> 19 TAC §74.4(c)(5)</p> <p><b>The student is expected to:</b></p> <p><b>(A)</b> learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing in English</p> <p><b>(B)</b> write using newly acquired basic vocabulary and content-based grade-level vocabulary</p> <p><b>(C)</b> spell familiar English words with increasing accuracy, and employ English spelling patterns and rules with increasing accuracy as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(D)</b> edit writing for standard grammar and usage, including subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and appropriate verb tenses commensurate with grade-level expectations as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(E)</b> employ increasingly complex grammatical structures in content area writing commensurate with grade-level expectations, such as:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>(i)</b> using correct verbs, tenses, and pronouns/ antecedents</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>(ii)</b> using possessive case (apostrophe s) correctly</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>(iii)</b> using negatives and contractions correctly</p> <p><b>(F)</b> write using a variety of grade-appropriate sentence lengths, patterns, and connecting words to combine phrases, clauses, and sentences in increasingly accurate ways as more English is acquired</p> <p><b>(G)</b> narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail to fulfill content area writing needs as more English is acquired</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Proficiency Level Descriptors</b> 19 TAC §74.4(d)(6)</p> <p><b>(C)</b> Advanced ELLs have enough English vocabulary and command of English language structures to address grade-appropriate writing tasks, although second language acquisition support is needed. These students:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>(i)</b> are able to use the English language, with second language acquisition support, to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>(ii)</b> know enough English to be able to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing in English, although second language acquisition support is particularly needed when topics are abstract, academically challenging, or unfamiliar</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>(iii)</b> exhibit writing features typical at this level, including</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>(I)</b> grasp of basic verbs, tenses, grammar features, and sentence patterns; partial grasp of more complex verbs, tenses, grammar features, and sentence patterns</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>(II)</b> emerging grade-appropriate vocabulary; academic writing has a more academic tone</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>(III)</b> use of a variety of common cohesive devices, although some redundancy may occur</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>(IV)</b> narrations, explanations, and descriptions developed in some detail with emerging clarity; quality or quantity declines when abstract ideas are expressed, academic demands are high, or low-frequency vocabulary is required</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>(V)</b> occasional second language acquisition errors</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>(VI)</b> communications are usually understood by individuals not accustomed to the writing of ELLs</p>

**Student expectations and PLDs may be abbreviated.**

## Writing Example 3: Rating a Student’s English Language Proficiency, Grade 8

Links to the writing samples in a student’s TELPAS writing collection are provided below to illustrate how teachers use the PLDs to holistically rate the English language writing proficiency of their ELs. A link to the student’s proficiency level rating, including the key features of the proficiency level descriptors exhibited, is also provided. All ELPS student expectations are addressed across the collection.

### TELPAS Student Writing Collection

**Writing assignment 1** Mathematics procedural writing—graphing equations

**Writing assignment 2** Science procedural writing—the scientific method

**Writing assignment 3** Descriptive writing on a familiar topic—personal description

**Writing assignment 4** Descriptive writing on a familiar topic—describing photographs

**Writing assignment 5** Narrative writing about a past event—going to school

**[CLICK HERE](#)** to see the student’s writing proficiency level rating.

# TELPAS Alternate, Grades 2–12

## Introduction

According to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the state is required to administer an alternate English language proficiency (ELP) assessment to ELs in grades 2–12 with the most significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in the general ELP assessment, even with allowable accommodations. In response, TEA worked with stakeholders to develop the TELPAS Alternate to evaluate students identified in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) as EB/EL who also have a significant cognitive disability.

Students taking TELPAS Alternate are in the process of acquiring English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; have one or more disabilities that significantly limit their intellectual functioning, as shown by their ability to plan, comprehend, and reason; and have one or more disabilities that significantly limit their adaptive behavior, as shown by their ability to apply social and practical skills.

All ELs in grades K–1 will be assessed with the general TELPAS in which students will be holistically rated in all four language domains. This decision was made on feedback from various stakeholders that the general TELPAS was accessible and appropriate for students at this early age, and that some grades K–1 students have not yet been identified with a disability (i.e., non-categorical).

## Alignment with State Curriculum

TELPAS Alternate assesses the ELPS, which districts are required to implement as an integral part of each foundation and enrichment subject of the TEKS state-required curriculum. The ELPS are second language acquisition standards that include three instructional components: cross-curricular second language acquisition essential knowledge and skills, PLDs, and linguistic accommodations. For an overview of the ELPS, refer to the TELPAS general information section of this guide.

To achieve the state’s educational goals for meeting the language and content needs of ELs who have significant cognitive disabilities, TEA developed Alternate PLDs for TELPAS Alternate to describe how well ELs with significant cognitive disabilities at each proficiency level are able to understand and use English. There are separate Alternate PLDs for each of the four language domains.

## Language Domains

TELPAS Alternate uses the same language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as TELPAS; however, the definitions of the TELPAS language domains are broader in TELPAS Alternate to allow for alternate forms of expressive and receptive language.

Domain	TELPAS Definition	TELPAS Alternate Refinement
Listening	the ability to understand spoken language, comprehend and extract information, and follow social and instructional discourse through which information is provided	the ability to understand spoken or signed language, comprehend and extract information, and follow social and instructional discourse through which information is provided
Speaking	the ability to use spoken language appropriately and effectively in learning activities and social interactions	the ability to use spoken language or alternative communication appropriately and effectively in learning activities and social interactions
Reading	the ability to comprehend and interpret written text at the grade-appropriate level	the ability to comprehend and interpret written text, including braille, at a modified level
Writing	the ability to produce written text with content and format to fulfill grade-appropriate classroom assignments	the ability to produce written text or alternative communication with content and format to fulfill classroom and community-based assignments

## Response Modes

For purposes of TELPAS Alternate, “English” is not limited to the typical spoken or written English of other state assessments. It is important to recognize that some ELs are using sign language, braille, or another method of communication as a substitute for traditional English in one domain or more. Teachers who are evaluating how well their students participate in classroom activities in English should take into account whether an alternate response mode is an appropriate way to demonstrate proficiency in a specific language domain.

Domain	Allowable Response Modes
For the <b>listening</b> domain, it is allowable for a student to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alert to</li> <li>• gaze at</li> <li>• point to</li> <li>• reach for</li> <li>• touch/pick up</li> <li>• draw</li> <li>• circle</li> <li>• nod</li> <li>• gesture towards the targeted stimulus</li> </ul>



Domain	Allowable Response Modes
For the <b>speaking</b> domain, it is allowable for a student to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• verbalize</li> <li>• form responses with the assistance of a communication device with preprogrammed familiar vocabulary or programmed student vocabulary</li> <li>• sign responses</li> </ul>
For the <b>reading</b> domain, it is allowable for a student to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• read</li> <li>• alert to</li> <li>• gaze at</li> <li>• point to</li> <li>• reach for</li> <li>• touch/pick up</li> <li>• draw</li> <li>• circle</li> <li>• nod</li> <li>• gesture towards the targeted stimulus</li> <li>• verbalize or sign by responding to letters, words, or numbers to form a response when a wide range of manipulatives are available</li> <li>• arrange letters, words, or numbers to form a response when a wide range of manipulatives are available</li> <li>• form responses with the assistance of a communication device with preprogrammed familiar vocabulary or programmed student vocabulary</li> <li>• indicate yes or no when presented with three or more choices and being asked, "Is this the ___?"</li> </ul>
For the <b>writing</b> domain, it is allowable for a student to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write</li> <li>• alert to</li> <li>• gaze at</li> <li>• point to</li> <li>• reach for</li> <li>• touch/pick up</li> <li>• draw</li> <li>• circle</li> <li>• nod</li> <li>• gesture towards the targeted stimulus</li> <li>• use adaptive writing equipment (typing, keyboarding)</li> <li>• arrange letters, words, or numbers to form a response when a wide range of manipulatives are available</li> </ul>

## TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors

Like the PLDs used for TELPAS, the Alternate PLDs align to the ELPS and present the major characteristics of each language proficiency level in each language domain. The Alternate PLDs use the broader definitions of the language domains developed for TELPAS Alternate to show the progression of second language acquisition from one proficiency level to the next. Whereas the TELPAS PLDs have four proficiency levels, the Alternate PLDs have five proficiency levels, as shown in the TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Levels and Policy Definitions chart.

For ease of use, the PLDs are presented in a chart format. For statewide consistency and consistency with the TELPAS PLDs, the Alternate PLDs are used in the format shown below.

TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors Grades 2–12 Listening					
Proficiency Level	Awareness	Imitation	Early Independence	Developing Independence	Basic Fluency
Summary Statement	ELs at this level have little or no functional ability to understand spoken English even when interacting with concrete symbols that are combined with highly familiar spoken words.	ELs at this level participate in routine listening activities in English when interacting with concrete symbols that are combined with highly familiar spoken words.	ELs at this level participate in listening activities in English when working with spoken short, simple messages.	ELs at this level demonstrate understanding of longer spoken messages of multiple sentences during listening activities in English.	ELs at this level are able to understand detailed and complex spoken messages in English.
Descriptors	These students may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require full second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>know too little English to understand or react to routine directions and simple conversations even when the topics are familiar and the speaker uses linguistic supports</li> <li>alert to or show reaction to spoken English, but do not demonstrate understanding</li> </ul>	These students may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require significant second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>understand simple familiar spoken words when paired with concrete symbols</li> <li>follow single-word directions when paired with concrete symbols</li> </ul>	These students may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require moderate second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>understand simple familiar spoken words, but not how they fit into a larger language context</li> <li>follow single-word directions</li> </ul>	These students may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require occasional second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>understand short simple conversations as well as short simple discussions on familiar topics</li> <li>follow single-step directions consisting of a few words</li> <li>often identify and distinguish key words and phrases necessary to understand the general meaning during social and academic interactions</li> </ul>	These students may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require minimal second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine across settings</li> <li>understand longer and more elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and unfamiliar topics, but sometimes need processing time</li> <li>follow multi-step directions</li> <li>understand most main points, most important details, and some implicit information during social and academic interactions</li> </ul>

While the Alternate PLDs are language-domain specific, the proficiency levels and their definitions remain constant across language domains. Understanding these definitions provides the foundation for learning the characteristics that are specific to each language domain.

### TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Levels and Policy Definitions

<b>Awareness</b>	Students who receive this rating may be aware of English sounds or print; however, they have little or no functional ability to participate in communication activities in English.
<b>Imitation</b>	Students who receive this rating match, imitate, or approximate some English in their environment; however, they are not able to independently understand or produce English. They participate in routine communication activities in a familiar environment when the activities are significantly linguistically accommodated.
<b>Early Independence</b>	Students who receive this rating understand short, simple messages and produce messages of one or two high-need, high-frequency words (e.g., book, cafeteria, teacher). They are starting to participate in linguistically accommodated communication activities in English in familiar environments.
<b>Developing Independence</b>	Students who receive this rating understand longer messages of multiple sentences in English and produce simple, descriptive, original messages by combining two or more words (e.g., new red bike, big fast truck). They participate meaningfully in linguistically accommodated communication activities in English in familiar environments.
<b>Basic Fluency</b>	Students who receive this rating understand and produce more detailed, complex, and elaborate messages with multiple sentences in English. These students participate independently in communication activities in English in familiar environments.

# TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors

## Grades 2–12 Listening

Awareness	Imitation	Early Independence	Developing Independence	Basic Fluency
<p><b>ELs at this level have little or no functional ability to understand spoken English even when interacting with concrete symbols that are combined with highly familiar spoken words.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level participate in routine listening activities in English when interacting with concrete symbols that are combined with highly familiar spoken words.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level participate in listening activities in English when working with spoken short, simple messages.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level demonstrate understanding of longer spoken messages of multiple sentences during listening activities in English.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level are able to understand detailed and complex spoken messages in English.</b></p>
<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require full second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• know too little English to understand or react to routine directions and simple conversations even when the topics are familiar and the speaker uses linguistic supports</li> <li>• alert to or show reaction to spoken English, but do not demonstrate understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require significant second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• understand simple familiar spoken words when paired with concrete symbols</li> <li>• follow single-word directions when paired with concrete symbols</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require moderate second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• understand simple familiar spoken words, but not how they fit into a larger language context</li> <li>• follow single-word directions</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require occasional second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• understand short simple conversations as well as short simple discussions on familiar topics</li> <li>• follow single-step directions consisting of a few words</li> <li>• often identify and distinguish key words and phrases necessary to understand the general meaning during social and academic interactions</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require minimal second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic listening activities in English in their daily routine across settings</li> <li>• understand longer and more elaborated directions, conversations, and discussions on familiar and unfamiliar topics, but sometimes need processing time</li> <li>• follow multi-step directions</li> <li>• understand most main points, most important details, and some implicit information during social and academic interactions</li> </ul>

# TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors

## Grades 2–12 Speaking

Awareness	Imitation	Early Independence	Developing Independence	Basic Fluency
<p>ELs at this level have little or no functional use of spoken English or augmentative and alternative communication even when interacting with highly familiar words.</p>	<p>ELs at this level approximate speaking or augmentative and alternative communication activities in English when interacting with highly familiar words.</p>	<p>ELs at this level participate in speaking or augmentative and alternative communication activities when working with familiar words.</p>	<p>ELs at this level produce short, simple messages in English or with augmentative and alternative communication.</p>	<p>ELs at this level produce detailed spoken messages in English or with augmentative and alternative communication.</p>
<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require full second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine</li> <li>know too little English to communicate simple ideas even when topics are highly familiar</li> <li>alert to or show reaction to stimuli, but do not demonstrate ability to clearly communicate thoughts</li> <li>not initiate spoken communication in English</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require significant second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine</li> <li>imitate or attempt to imitate use of spoken English words after modeling</li> <li>rarely initiate spoken communication in English independently</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require moderate second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine</li> <li>communicate with a very limited vocabulary of high-frequency, high-need, concrete one- or two-word responses</li> <li>not understand how words fit into a larger language context</li> <li>hesitate to speak in English and often give up in their attempts to communicate</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require occasional second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine</li> <li>combine spoken words to create simple original messages</li> <li>pause to find words to restate or clarify meaning</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require minimal second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine across settings</li> <li>be able to express detailed ideas through spoken words in social and academic English</li> <li>occasionally pause to search for words and phrases to clarify meaning</li> </ul>

# TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors

## Grades 2–12 Reading

Awareness	Imitation	Early Independence	Developing Independence	Basic Fluency
<p><b>ELs at this level have little or no functional use of the English language even when interacting with concrete symbols that are combined with highly familiar letters and words.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level participate in routine reading activities that include matching when interacting with concrete symbols that are combined with highly familiar letters and words.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level participate in reading activities in English when working with highly familiar words.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level participate meaningfully in reading activities in English when working with words and simple text.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level are able to read and understand more detailed texts in English.</b></p>
<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require full second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic reading activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• alert to or show reaction to concrete symbols, letters, and/or words in English, but do not demonstrate understanding</li> <li>• alert to or show reaction to letter sounds in English, but do not demonstrate understanding</li> <li>• not react or respond to letters, words, texts, or concrete symbols</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require significant second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic reading activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• understand letters or words when paired with concrete symbols</li> <li>• recognize a limited number of concrete symbols combined with letters or high frequency/high need sight words</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require moderate second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic reading activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• understand a few single printed words, but not how they fit into a larger language context</li> <li>• identify a limited number of high frequency/high need sight words</li> <li>• demonstrate the ability to pair letters with sounds</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require occasional second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic reading activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• understand how individual words or phrases connect to other words or phrases</li> <li>• decode simple words or phrases</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require minimal second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic reading activities in English in their daily routine across settings</li> <li>• understand longer and more detailed social and academic texts in English</li> <li>• decode longer and less familiar words, phrases, or sentences</li> </ul>

# TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors

## Grades 2–12 Writing

Awareness	Imitation	Early Independence	Developing Independence	Basic Fluency
<p><b>ELs at this level have little or no functional use of written English or augmentative and alternative communication even when interacting with highly familiar letters and words.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level approximate writing or augmentative and alternative communication activities in English when interacting with highly familiar letters and words.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level participate in writing or augmentative and alternative communication activities in English when working with letters and highly familiar words.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level participate meaningfully in writing or using augmentative and alternative communication activities to write simple, short original messages in English.</b></p>	<p><b>ELs at this level are able to produce detailed and complex written messages in English or with augmentative and alternative communication.</b></p>
<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require full second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic writing activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• know too little English to participate in shared writing activities</li> <li>• alert to or show reaction to stimuli, but do not demonstrate the ability to communicate their thoughts in writing</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require significant second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic writing activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• begin to participate in routine shared writing activities with teacher modeling</li> <li>• attempt to write symbols or letters</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require moderate second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic writing activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• actively participate in shared writing activities when the writing topic is routine and concrete</li> <li>• write a few single letters or words, but do not understand how they fit into a larger language context*</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require occasional second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic writing activities in English in their daily routine</li> <li>• actively participate in shared writing activities when the writing topic is familiar</li> <li>• write simple, original messages consisting of a few words or memorized phrases*</li> <li>• label, list, and copy high frequency words and phrases*</li> </ul>	<p><b>These students may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require minimal second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic writing activities in English in their daily routine across settings</li> <li>• contribute written text to shared writing activities when the writing topic has been recently experienced*</li> <li>• write detailed texts in social and academic English*</li> </ul>

\*Students using augmentative and alternate communication (AAC) as expressive communication must use symbols that are combined with printed letters or words beginning with the "Early Independence" level.

## Test Development Process

As it does with all Texas assessments, TEA involves a wide variety of educators, assessment experts, and administrators in the test development process. These included

- bilingual and ESL and special education teachers,
- bilingual and ESL coordinators,
- district and campus coordinators and administrators,
- assessment experts, and
- second language acquisition experts and researchers.

This group of educators, experts, and administrators provided feedback on many components of this alternate assessment. These include

- Observable Behaviors for the holistic inventory,
- Alternate PLDs,
- eligibility requirements, and
- classroom examples for each Observable Behavior.

## Design of the TELPAS Alternate Assessment

TELPAS Alternate is a holistic inventory aligned to the ELPS and based on Alternate PLDs that describe the English language acquisition progress of a student with significant cognitive disabilities. The inventory includes 40 descriptions of behaviors, called Observable Behaviors, for test administrators to consider regarding each student’s use of the English language in the four language domains. Each Observable Behavior describes characteristics that students with significant cognitive disabilities learning English demonstrate as they gain proficiency. Figure 1 shows an example of an Observable Behavior that addresses the skill of decoding within the reading domain. The boxes contain the five characteristics students with significant cognitive disabilities may demonstrate.

**Figure 1. Sample Observable Behavior for Decoding**

R2. The student:					
Decoding	may or may not attend to familiar word/picture combinations	matches familiar word/picture combinations to identical word/picture combinations	selects requested high-frequency words from a group of words	decodes words or phrases consisting of a few simple high-frequency words	decodes longer phrases or sentences with some unfamiliar words
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

The Observable Behavior for decoding in Figure 1 aligns to ELPS 4(A), which reads:

*(A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language and decode (sound out) words using a combination of skills such as recognizing sound-letter relationships and identifying cognates, affixes, roots, and base words*

The behaviors from the first proficiency level to the final proficiency level show a possible progression from being unable to decode to exhibiting decoding skills as described in the standard.

## Observable Behaviors “Notes Version”

Additionally, a “notes version” of the Observable Behaviors is available so that educators can become familiar with the Observable Behaviors and can practice or take notes during the school year. This version of the Observable Behaviors is for optional use on individual students and should not be used to officially rate eligible students prior to the assessment window. The “notes version” can be found on the [TELPAS Alternate Resources](#) webpage.

R2. The student:					
Decoding	may or may not attend to familiar word/picture combinations	matches familiar word/picture combinations to identical word/picture combinations	selects requested high-frequency words from a group of words	decodes words or phrases consisting of a few simple high-frequency words	decodes longer phrases or sentences with some unfamiliar words

## Observable Behaviors with Classroom Examples

Texas teachers developed classroom examples to help test administrators better understand the descriptions of student performance for each Observable Behavior. These elementary and secondary examples describe one way that students could demonstrate each skill across the five levels of proficiency.

The purpose of each example is to illustrate how a student *could* demonstrate the skill at each proficiency level. There are many other classroom scenarios that could be used as examples for the Observable Behaviors. The classroom examples are not intended to be used as test questions or performance tasks to replicate, although using them for this purpose is acceptable, if needed. Teachers are encouraged to use their own activities in the regular classroom when determining a student’s ability to understand and use English. A PDF version of TELPAS Alternate Observable Behaviors and Classroom Examples can be found on the [TELPAS Alternate Resources](#) webpage.



## Sample Classroom Example

<b>R2. The student:</b>					
<b>Decoding</b>	may or may not attend to familiar word/picture combinations	matches familiar word/picture combinations to identical word/picture combinations	selects requested high-frequency words from a group of words	decodes words or phrases consisting of a few simple high-frequency words	decodes longer phrases or sentences with some unfamiliar words
<b>Elementary</b>	Teacher reads a familiar story to student and points to the word and picture of "cat." Student then touches teacher and smiles.	Student matches a word/picture combination of "cat" to an identical word/picture combination of "cat".	Teacher asks student to find the word "cat". Student locates the word "cat" from a group of words.	Student reads the phrase "fast black cat" independently.	Student reads the sentence, "The cat jumps on the sofa."
<b>Secondary</b>	Teacher reads a word/ picture combination of a familiar staff member "Mr. Smith" and says "Mr. Smith." The student touches the picture.	Student matches a word/picture combination of "Mr. Smith" to an identical word/picture combination of "Mr. Smith."	Teacher asks student to find the words "Mr. Smith". Student locates the words "Mr. Smith" from a group of other familiar staff members' names.	Student reads the words "Mr. Smith" and "bus" from the sentence "Mr. Smith drives the bus."	Student reads the sentence, "Mr. Smith drives the bus for our field trip."

## Spring Summative Assessment

TELPAS Alternate assesses the English language proficiency of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities as a summative spring assessment. While a given student has only one test administrator marking the holistic inventory, this test administrator is encouraged to collaborate with other teachers of the EL with significant cognitive disabilities.

In addition to the training TELPAS Alternate test administrators complete prior to the spring assessment, several training PowerPoint presentations are available on the [TELPAS Alternate Resources](#) webpage and the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#). The presentations in LMS will include narration. These training opportunities prepare test administrators to score the Observable Behaviors in a consistent and accurate manner statewide.

## Test Blueprints and Reporting Categories

The following tables show the number of Observable Behaviors per reporting category, or skill area, in each of the four language domains. The ELPS student expectations organized under each reporting category are shown below each table.

### Listening Reporting Categories

Listening Reporting Categories	Number of Observable Behaviors
Reporting Category 1: Understand spoken words and language structures	4
Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of spoken English	6

#### Listening Reporting Category 1

**The student will demonstrate an understanding of spoken words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English.**

The student is expected to:

- (A) distinguish sounds and intonation patterns of English with increasing ease;
- (C) learn new language structures, expressions, and basic and academic vocabulary heard during classroom instruction and interactions; and
- (F) listen to and derive meaning from a variety of media such as audio tape, video, DVD, and CD ROM to build and reinforce concept and language attainment.

#### Listening Reporting Category 2

**The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of spoken English used in a variety of contexts.**

The student is expected to:

- (G) understand the general meaning, main points, and important details of spoken language ranging from situations in which topics, language, and contexts are familiar to unfamiliar; and
- (I) demonstrate listening comprehension of increasingly complex spoken English by following directions, retelling or summarizing spoken messages, responding to questions and requests, collaborating with peers, and taking notes commensurate with content and grade-level needs.

## Speaking Reporting Categories

Speaking Reporting Categories	Number of Observable Behaviors
Reporting Category 1: Provide and summarize information	7
Reporting Category 2: Share opinions and analyze information	3

### Speaking Reporting Category 1

**The student will demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to provide and summarize information in a variety of academic and social situations.**

The student is expected to:

- (B) expand and internalize initial English vocabulary by learning and using high-frequency English words necessary for identifying and describing people, places, and objects, by retelling simple stories and basic information represented or supported by pictures, and by learning and using routine language needed for classroom communication;
- (E) share information in cooperative learning interactions;
- (F) ask and give information ranging from using a very limited bank of high frequency, high-need, concrete vocabulary, including key words and expressions needed for basic communication in academic and social contexts, to using abstract and content-based vocabulary during extended speaking assignments; and
- (H) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail as more English is acquired.

### Speaking Reporting Category 2

**The student will demonstrate an ability to use spoken English to share opinions and analyze information in a variety of academic and social situations.**

The student is expected to:

- (G) express opinions, ideas, and feelings ranging from communicating single words and short phrases to participating in extended discussions on a variety of social and grade-appropriate academic topics; and
- (J) respond orally to information presented in a wide variety of print, electronic, audio, and visual media to build and reinforce concept and language attainment.

## Reading Reporting Categories

Reading Reporting Categories	Number of Observable Behaviors
Reporting Category 1: Understand words and language structures	5
Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of variety of texts written in English	3
Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English	2

### Reading Reporting Category 1

**The student will demonstrate an understanding of words and language structures necessary for constructing meaning in English.**

The student is expected to:

- (A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language and decode (sound out) words using a combination of skills such as recognizing sound-letter relationships and identifying cognates, affixes, roots, and base words;
- (C) develop basic sight vocabulary, derive meaning of environmental print, and comprehend English vocabulary and language structures used routinely in written classroom materials; and
- (F) use visual and contextual support and support from peers and teachers to read grade-appropriate subject-area text, enhance and confirm understanding, and develop vocabulary, grasp of language structures, and background knowledge needed to comprehend increasingly challenging language.

### Reading Reporting Category 2

**The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of a variety of texts written in English.**

The student is expected to:

- (G) demonstrate comprehension of increasingly complex English by participating in shared reading, retelling or summarizing material, responding to questions, and taking notes commensurate with subject-area and grade level needs;
- (I) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing basic reading skills such as demonstrating understanding of supporting ideas and details in text and graphic sources, summarizing text, and

distinguishing main ideas from details commensurate with subject-area needs.

### Reading Reporting Category 3

**The student will demonstrate an ability to analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English.**

The student is expected to:

- J) demonstrate English comprehension and expand reading skills by employing inferential skills such as predicting, making connections between ideas, drawing inferences and conclusions from text and graphic sources, and finding supporting text evidence commensurate with subject-area needs.

### Writing Reporting Categories

Writing Reporting Categories	Number of Observable Behaviors
Reporting Category 1: Demonstrate an ability to use English vocabulary and language structures in a variety of academic and social situations	4
Reporting Category 2: Demonstrate an ability to apply knowledge of English to complete a variety of writing tasks	6

#### Writing Reporting Category 1: Demonstrate an ability to use English vocabulary and language structures in a variety of academic and social situations

- (A) learn relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing in English;
- (B) write using newly acquired basic vocabulary and content-based grade-level vocabulary; and
- (C) spell familiar English words with increasing accuracy, and employ English spelling patterns and rules with increasing accuracy as more English is acquired

#### Writing Reporting Category 2: Demonstrate an ability to apply knowledge of English to complete a variety of writing tasks

- (D) edit writing for standard grammar and usage, including subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and appropriate verb tenses commensurate with grade-level expectations as more English is acquired;
- (E) employ increasingly complex grammatical structures in subject-area writing commensurate with grade-level expectations, such as:

- (i) using correct verbs, tenses, and pronouns/antecedents;
  - (ii) using possessive case (apostrophe s) correctly; and
  - (iii) using negatives and contractions correctly;
- (F) write using a variety of grade-appropriate sentence lengths, patterns, and connecting words to combine phrases, clauses, and sentences in increasingly accurate ways as more English is acquired; and
- (G) narrate, describe, and explain with increasing specificity and detail to fulfill subject-area writing needs as more English is acquired.

## Setting and Maintaining Performance Standards

Standard-setting for TELPAS Alternate was conducted to support the ability of the tests to measure and report performance in alignment with the Alternate PLDs. The proficiency levels reported coincide with the proficiency levels of the students as defined by the Alternate PLDs. The standard-setting process determines how well students must perform on the test to be classified into each proficiency level category. The performance standards are maintained across school years through a test-equating process.

## Test Results

TELPAS Alternate score reports include the individual proficiency level rating of students (awareness, imitation, early independence, developing independence, or basic fluency) in each of the four language domains assessed. Composite proficiency ratings are also provided.

Composite proficiency ratings provide a single overall level of English language proficiency derived from the proficiency ratings in the four language domains. The composite rating weights are 25 percent for each language domain.

TELPAS Alternate Report Cards are reports that explain TELPAS Alternate results to parents. They are produced in English and Spanish and are available for teachers, students, and parents to access in the Texas Assessment portals.

Detailed information about TELPAS Alternate score reports is provided on the [Texas Assessment](#) website.

TELPAS Alternate results are used in the following ways:

- to help parents monitor the progress their children make in learning English
- to inform instructional planning and program exit decisions for individual students
- to report performance to local school boards, school professionals, and the community

- to evaluate programs, resources, and staffing patterns
- to evaluate districts and campuses in a variety of state and federal accountability measures





# Appendix

# Appendix: ELPS Student Expectations, Learning Strategies

## Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 74.4(c)(1)

In addition to student expectations for the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, the ELPS include student expectations related to learning strategies. The skills in this strand help ELs become active and strategic language learners. Learning to employ these strategies in the context of content area instruction supports the learning of both English and content area knowledge and skills.

Each student expectation spans one or more of the four language domains. Additionally, some strategies apply equally at all stages of second language acquisition, while others are more relevant at lower or higher proficiency levels. As teachers become familiar with the ELPS PLDs, they gain an understanding of when the various strategies become most useful.

Learning strategies are vital in supporting and accelerating second language acquisition across the four language domains and should be equally emphasized in teachers' lesson plans.

## Learning Strategies, 19 TAC, Chapter 74.4(c)(1)

**(1) Cross-curricular second language acquisition/learning strategies. The ELL uses language learning strategies to develop an awareness of his or her own learning processes in all content areas. In order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student's level of English language proficiency. The student is expected to:**

- (A) use prior knowledge and experiences to understand meanings in English;
- (B) monitor oral and written language production and employ self-corrective techniques or other resources;
- (C) use strategic learning techniques such as concept mapping, drawing, memorizing, comparing, contrasting, and reviewing to acquire basic and grade-level vocabulary;
- (D) speak using learning strategies such as requesting assistance, employing non-verbal cues, and using synonyms and circumlocution (conveying ideas by defining or describing when exact English words are not known);
- (E) internalize new basic and academic language by using and reusing it in meaningful ways in speaking and writing activities that build concept and language attainment;
- (F) use accessible language and learn new and essential language in the process;
- (G) demonstrate an increasing ability to distinguish between formal and informal English and an increasing knowledge of when to use each one commensurate with grade-level learning expectations; and
- (H) develop and expand repertoire of learning strategies such as reasoning inductively or deductively, looking for patterns in language, and analyzing sayings and expressions commensurate with grade-level learning expectations.





TE★AS ASSESSMENT