

English Language Learner Proficiency Standards



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Utah's Academic English Language Proficiency Standards

K-12

Introduction

The goal in developing Utah's English Language Proficiency Standards is to provide support for English language learners. The English Language Proficiency Standards provide guidance in the following ways: (1) Define the academic English proficiency, by grade band, for students to access the Utah Core Curricula objectives; (2) Establish criteria for Utah's Academic English Language Proficiency Assessment (UALPA).

The continuing challenge for educators is how to provide all students with an excellent and accessible education. The challenge of learning is intensified for the more than 52,000 Utah English language learners (ELLs) who must meet the core academic standards while still only having emerging academic English language skills. The English Language Proficiency Standards articulate the English language skills necessary to be successful in school.

It is important to note these expectations do not limit, but provide a range of academic pathways to achieve proficiency, and apply regardless of the grade level at which students enter Utah schools. The standards identify listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills across the proficiency levels of pre-emergent, emergent, intermediate, advanced, and fluent.

The English Language Proficiency Standards are not specific to a single type of English language instruction educational program or classroom setting (e.g., Mainstream English, English Immersion, Dual Language, Early Transition-Bilingual, and Late Transition Bilingual). Each student should receive instruction reflecting his/her proficiency in English, with meaningful access to grade-level academic content. Utah's English Language Proficiency Assessment standards do not replace the Core Curriculum. It identifies the levels of academic language acquisition of a student. However, the standards provide information about the skill level at which students can access the core curriculum. Students should have access to the general curriculum in addition to language acquisition instruction, regardless of language proficiency level. The ELL assessment standards, objectives, and expectations help the classroom teacher identify the basic skills that ELLs (as identified by their proficiency level [P, E, I, A, F]) need to access the state curriculum. These language domains/modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) should be used to guide instruction for the core curriculum. Districts will determine the instructional services provided for each ELL.

English Language Proficiency Levels

Pre-Emergent (P) Level: The student has limited or no understanding of oral or written English, and therefore will be participating by listening. The student may demonstrate comprehension by using a few isolated words or expressions of speech. The student typically draws, copies, or responds verbally in his/her native language to simple commands, statements, and questions. The student may begin to understand language in the realm of basic communication. Reading and writing are significantly below grade level. The student is identified at the P level on the UALPA.

Emergent (E) Level: The student understands and responds to basic social conventions, simple questions, simple directions, and appropriate-level text. In general, the student speaks, reads, and writes using single phrases or sentences with support. The student may begin to use minimal academic vocabulary with support and participate in classroom routines. The student is identified at the E level on the UALPA.

Intermediate (I) Level: The student understands and speaks conversational and academic English with decreasing hesitancy and difficulty. The student is developing reading comprehension and writing skills, with support. The student's English literacy skills allow for demonstration of academic knowledge. The student reads and writes independently for personal and academic purposes, with some persistent errors. The student is identified at the I level on the UALPA.

Advanced (A) Level: The student understands and speaks conversational and academic English language. The student demonstrates reading comprehension and writing skills, but may need continued support when engaged in complex academic tasks that require increasingly academic language. The student is identified at the A level on the UALPA, but is not proficient on the ELA CRT. The student continues to be assessed annually on the UALPA and CRT.

Fluent with Monitoring (F) Level: The student is identified at the A level on the UALPA and proficient on grade level ELA CRT (district literacy assessment K-1). The student is exited from the ELL program, having achieved fluency, and is monitored for up to two years after exit. For the purpose of calculating AYP, the student scores are counted in the ELL subgroup for two years after exit. The student no longer receives federal funds. During the two-year monitoring period, the school may reevaluate student to change proficiency level as appropriate. At the conclusion of the two years, the F designation is removed.

Language Proficiency Modality Level Descriptors

Proficiency Level:	Pre-Emergent	Emergent	Intermediate	Advanced	Fluent
Language Domain:					
Listening	Participates by listening, with limited or no understanding.	Participates in classroom routines, showing understanding of phrases and short sentences with support.	Understands more complex speech and formal language, but still needs some support and repetition. Understands and participates with decreasing hesitancy and difficulty.	Has developed proficiency in academic English language.	Participates fully in listening activities. Students at this level are functioning effectively in an environment with native English speaking peers; therefore, this proficiency level reflects achieved competence in the expectation as required of all students.
Speaking	May respond using a few isolated words or expressions of speech.	Typically has minimal expressive vocabulary, but may respond with single words, short phrases, or simple sentences with support. Uses minimal academic vocabulary.	Participates actively in most social and classroom tasks using simple sentences, with some grammatical errors and limited specialized content language.	Participates actively in social and academic tasks.	Has achieved English language fluency. Students at this level are functioning effectively in an environment with native English speaking peers; therefore, this proficiency level reflects achieved competence in the expectation as required of all students.
Reading	May construct meaning from text using non-print features (e.g., illustrations, tables).	Begins to locate specific, predictable information in simple everyday or environmental print.	With some support, reads about various topics using different genres.	Has developed proficiency in English language literacy skills.	Participates by using grade-level text. Students at this level are functioning effectively in an environment with native English speaking peers; therefore, this proficiency level reflects achieved competence in the expectation as required of all students.
Writing	Typically draws and/or copies, or responds verbally using his/her native language.	Writes single words and short phrases using appropriate-level text with support.	Writes using different genres for a variety of audiences with persistent errors. Writes independently for personal and academic purposes with persistent errors.	May need continued support when engaged in complex academic tasks that require increased academic language.	Writes classroom assignments correctly. Students at this level are functioning effectively in an environment with native English speaking peers; therefore, this proficiency level reflects achieved competence in the expectation as required of all students.

Grades 7-8

Standard I: Listening – Comprehend and interpret the spoken language of others.

Objective 1: Identify specific purposes for listening to others’ ideas and respond appropriately.

Expectations	P	E	I	A	F
1. Listen to the ideas of others to gain information and make inferences.	Listen to and match ideas of others to pictures or words with support.	Listen to and match ideas of others to pictures or words with minimal support.	Listen to the ideas of others to gain information and make inferences.	Summarize the ideas of others by listening and making inferences.	Identify main ideas by listening to lectures and peers’ presentations to make inferences.
2. Distinguish between factual statements and inferences.	Does not apply to Pre-Emergent 7-8 level.	Identify fact and opinion with visual support and guided practice.	Categorize fact and fiction from oral statements and make inferences from classroom activities.	Distinguish between factual statements and inferences by evaluating and selecting information from oral speech, discourse, and conversations.	Analyze the effect of factual statements and inferences in lectures, presentations, and school activities.
3. Respond to commands and directions.	Respond nonverbally to teacher’s commands for classroom instructions (e.g., “Open your books to page 34. Get in groups of three”).	Follow multi-step directions and commands related to classroom interactions.	Follow commands and directions by listening and analyzing what is heard.	Respond to commands by paraphrasing, summarizing, or following directions.	Respond by analyzing idiomatic and figurative language (e.g., hyperboles, metaphors) after instruction.

Grades 7-8

Standard I: Listening – Comprehend and interpret the spoken language of others.

Objective 2: Listen to peers, teachers, and others to clarify, question, and extend conjectures (e.g., supposition, guess, assumption, inference).

Expectations	P	E	I	A	F
1. Listen to the ideas of others.	Match words and ideas represented by objects or illustrations.	Match ideas from different types of listening assignments to visual representations with support.	Follow short, predictable discourse in social and academic content area discussions.	Identify main ideas and implications from academic discourse (e.g., speeches, presentations, lectures, web conferences and video conferences).	Evaluate point of view of speakers in small groups in social and academic content area discussions.
2. Use a variety of strategies for solving problems (e.g., analyzing, classifying, comparing).	Identify elements, models, or diagrams according to oral directions.	Classify short descriptions using visual support.	Arrange information based on sequential oral directions.	Analyze and reproduce an illustrated and orally presented process.	Evaluate an orally presented process.
3. Analyze and extend conjectures (e.g., supposition, guess, assumption, inference, speculation, and hypotheses).	Does not apply to Pre-Emergent 7-8 level.	Identify conjectures from a discussion or conversation.	Demonstrate understanding of a conjecture by listening to discussions, conversations, or lectures, and respond to multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank activities.	Listen to discussions, conversations, lectures, and debates, and extend a heard conjecture by expressing opinions.	Analyze and extend conjectures by listening to a lecture.

Grades 7-8

Standard II: Speaking – Formulate ideas and communicate ideas effectively to others.

Objective 1: Use academic language to express ideas coherently and clearly to peers, teachers, and others.

Expectations	P	E	I	A	F
1. Use academic vocabulary to describe concepts (e.g., generalize, conclude, hypothesis, theory, evidence, inference, predict, analyze, investigate, solve, explain, intensity, fats, proteins, duration, coordination, endurance, strength, vigorous).	Use gestures and one-word responses to communicate and express understanding.	Demonstrate understanding of academic concepts by answering simple questions with support.	Contribute orally to classroom academic discussions.	Describe a person, object, or situation in some detail, using the appropriate academic content language in a short oral presentation.	Orally lead classroom academic discussions.
2. Employ precise academic language to express ideas (e.g., equation, solution, variable, ratio, proportion).	Repeat short patterns of words and phrases.	Contribute to classroom and academic discussions by giving simple responses.	Analyze and explain in sequence an equation, a story problem, a literary passage, or the results of an experiment.	Explain orally, using academic content language, the possible outcomes, cause and effect, and experiment results.	Prepare and deliver a speech defending a point of view that is organized and uses precise, descriptive vocabulary.
3. Discuss possible outcomes of investigations.	Respond in short patterns of words and phrases.	Discuss a narrative passage or experience using sequence and detail.	Explain orally the possible outcomes of change.	Analyze and explain a process to focus on the results or outcomes.	Prepare and deliver a speech defending a point of view.

Grades 7-8

Standard II: Speaking – Formulate ideas and communicate ideas effectively to others.

Objective 2: Speak in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Expectations	P	E	I	A	F
1. Paraphrase classroom discussions, restating key ideas.	Repeat classroom directions with visual support.	Restate or rephrase information given in a content area discussion (e.g., directions, a process).	Restate academic material that has been read or discussed.	Paraphrase by using academic content language in classroom discussions.	Expand academic vocabulary by explaining or restating.
2. Respond to humor in conversation.	Begin to use common sayings and slang with peers.	Respond to humorous expressions in a variety of contexts.	Retell a humorous story for an appropriate setting and audience.	Express humor using word plays, jokes, and riddles.	Express content language, showing understanding of humor.
3. Speak clearly, using appropriate grammatical structures, while engaging in classroom discussions.	Listen to conversations and imitate classroom speech with appropriate grammar after modeling.	Take turns when speaking and participating, with some grammatical errors.	Use questions and statements to request assistance to complete a task, using appropriate grammatical structures.	Analyze and explain a process using correct grammatical structures to focus on the results or outcomes.	Use appropriate language and grammatical structures for self-monitoring to negotiate communication and reach consensus.

Grades 7-8

Standard III: Reading – Comprehend and interpret concepts from text.

Objective 1: Decode and spell words with increased vocabulary knowledge and appropriate usage.

Expectations	P	E	I	A	F
1. Comprehend word meaning, phonetically decode and spell.	Distinguish among sounds that are similar and different.	Distinguish between similarly spelled words like angel and angle, geometry and geography with support.	Use decoding skills to spell and comprehend meaning.	Decode words to determine meanings, interpret concepts, and express vocabulary knowledge.	Read and interpret academic text by using decoding and word comprehension skills.
2. Use knowledge of word origins to support reading and spelling.	Does not apply to Pre-Emergent 7-8 level.	Use knowledge of vocabulary to understand reading.	Use prefixes and suffixes to decode the content language (e.g., mathematics: bisect means cut in two equal pieces).	Apply word origins knowledge to comprehend text.	Use knowledge of word origins to scan, skim, and comprehend academic text (e.g., math, science, language arts).
3. Develop vocabulary knowledge and correct usage of academic terms (e.g., hypothesis, cell, organism, line, graph, equation, solution, sum, factor, continents, government, constitutional law, revolution).	Identify objects and pictures using academic vocabulary with support.	Classify objects, pictures, and concepts from academic texts using correct vocabulary.	Make predictions about academic text using knowledge of vocabulary and usage.	Expand expressive language by using vocabulary from oral reading of texts, lectures, and presentations.	Compare/contrast relationships that verify or contradict hypotheses as described in content areas, using correct vocabulary.
4. Extend vocabulary knowledge and usage (e.g., theory, data, generalize, investigate, predict, chronology, context, culture).	Does not apply to Pre-Emergent 7-8 level.	Recognize differences between language used with peers and with adults.	Determine the intended meaning of words in simple text using context clues.	Use the appropriate language for reading selections to extend vocabulary usage.	Determine the meaning of figurative language, including similes, in content text.

Grades 7-8

Standard III: Reading – Comprehend and interpret concepts from text.

Objective 2: Evaluate academic language and text with understanding and fluency.

Expectations	P	E	I	A	F
1. Increase fluency when reading aloud while recognizing numerals and other symbols.	Match pictures to demonstrate recognition of numerals and other symbols.	Match pictures and phrases using academic language to improve fluency.	Express symbols such as + and - as words like add, sum, subtract, and difference while reading fluently.	Translate symbols fluently into the corresponding words as the text is read aloud.	Evaluate readings by reading aloud fluently, recognizing symbols and numerals in academic text patterns.
2. Connect academic tasks of processes and interpretation.	Identify data from texts with support.	Match text features with assignments. Label the term corresponding to a given definition.	Identify processes and procedures by sequencing and classifying.	Identify processes presented in academic texts.	Use prior knowledge to evaluate new information in academic texts.
3. Summarize reading and generate key questions about text.	Does not apply to Pre-Emergent 7-8 level.	Identify key questions about the text using visual support.	Answer comprehension questions based on information contained in text (e.g., capitalization, punctuation, paragraph structure, format).	Identify the main idea, key words, and important details in text and answer related questions.	Extract, interpret, and summarize information found in academic texts.
4. Recognize a variety of text structures and identify the purposes for reading different texts.	Match pictures to texts and symbols.	Distinguish reading purposes using different text structures with teacher and visual support.	Locate important information for different reading purposes such as vocabulary words or examples using a variety of text structures in academic texts.	Identify and interpret a variety of texts using knowledge of text structure and reading purposes.	Distinguish, match, and recognize a variety of text structures to identify academic text purposes.

5. Summarize the main idea and critical details of text.	Does not apply to Pre-Emergent 7-8 level.	Identify the main idea in brief text read orally using pictures.	Identify the main idea and some supporting details in brief text read aloud with visuals.	Summarize the main idea and some critical details in brief text written or orally.	Summarize the main idea and some critical details in brief text written or orally.
6. Analyze characters, setting, and plots in text.	Does not apply to Pre-Emergent 7-8 level.	Identify the main characters and basic sequence of events in simple stories read aloud with visuals.	Describe the main characters, setting, and basic sequence of events in simple stories read or heard with visuals.	Distinguish between the main characters and minor characters in stories read or heard with visuals.	Analyze the plot development, including types of conflict, in a story.

Grades 7-8

Standard IV: Writing – Compose and communicate ideas through writing.

Objective 1: Create and use representations to organize and communicate ideas.

Expectations	P	E	I	A	F
1. Attend to writing mechanics (e.g., capital letters, periods, question marks, exclamation marks, commas).	Recognize writing mechanics with visual support from teachers.	Produce simple text using writing mechanics with assistance.	Produce text using writing mechanics.	Apply writing mechanics to compose and communicate ideas in writing.	Create and attend to writing mechanics to organize and communicate ideas in writing.
2. Record, interpret, and represent data accurately using the appropriate graph, data table, pictorial, or scale drawings.	Identify data with visuals and teacher's support.	Record the elements of data with peers' and teacher's support.	Record and interpret tables or graphs from an experiment or by gathering data.	Record and interpret data by communicating ideas in writing.	Evaluate, display, and represent data accurately in writing using graphs and tables.
3. Explain and/or illustrate problem-solving processes using diagrams, words, or mathematical symbols.	Draw and label charts using information given with visual support.	Estimate outcomes using phrases.	Describe in phrases or simple sentences a problem-solving process.	Compare possible combinations or outcomes using sentences.	Explain and justify in paragraph form the solutions to given problems.

Grades 7-8

Standard IV: Writing – Compose and communicate ideas through writing.

Objective 2: Express ideas to peers, teachers, and others through written language.

Expectations	P	E	I	A	F
1. Develop clear ideas with supporting details.	Does not apply to Pre-Emergent 7-8 level.	Write main ideas and supporting details with visual support and/or templates.	Write clear ideas with supporting details with simple sentences in narrative text.	Produce classification and/or comparison and contrast paragraphs after instruction.	Develop clear ideas with supporting ideas for grade-level writing requirements.
2. Write narrative, expository, and persuasive text.	Identify simple narrative, expository, and persuasive text by following written samples after instruction.	Write short examples of narrative, and descriptive text with teacher's and peers' support.	Develop narrative and argumentative ideas to express opinions to peers and teachers through writing with some grammatical errors.	Use narrative, expository, or persuasive writing to express ideas.	Develop and use narrative, expository, or persuasive writing to express ideas.