WIDA®
CONSORTIUM
WORLD-CLASS INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN AND ASSESSMENT

The English Language Learner Can Do Booklet

Grades PreKindergarten - Kindergarten

INCLUDES:
Performance Definitions
Can Do Descriptors

For use in conjunction with the
WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards

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Foreword: The WIDA English Language Learner Can Do Booklet

The WIDA Consortium, from its conception, envisioned a system of standards and assessments that would assist schools in teaching academic language to English Language Learners (ELLs). This dream, now a reality, includes the development of practical tools to guide teachers when designing and implementing lessons, monitoring student progress, determining student language proficiency levels, collaborating across programs, and conveying results to ELLs and their parents.

The *WIDA English Language Learner Can Do Booklet* is a very important contribution to meeting these goals. The booklet complements the *WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards* and provides a valuable set of resources aligned to the Performance Definitions for the levels of English language proficiency. WIDA's professional development program works with these resources to assist teachers in embedding academic English into content lessons and working school-wide to ensure the academic success of our culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

The WIDA Consortium recognizes that as a teacher of ELLs, you have a challenging but crucial job within your school. We sincerely hope that this booklet and other WIDA resources help to make your work more effective and your students more successful both in learning English and mastering challenging academic content.

Timothy Boals, Ph.D.
Executive Director
WIDA Consortium

Introduction

The resources contained in this booklet are intended to support classroom instruction. As with all WIDA products and services, they address language proficiency in relation to five English language proficiency (ELP) standards:

- Social and Instructional Language
- The Language of Language Arts
- The Language of Mathematics
- The Language of Science
- The Language of Social Studies

The following table displays the major components of WIDA's standards-based system. The bold-faced components are included in this booklet and listed in the order in which they appear.

Components of WIDA's Standards-based System	
Standards-based Component	**Distinguishing Feature**
Strands of Model Performance Indicators as representative of the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards	Illustrate how English language learners process and use language for each English language **proficiency standard, language domain,** and language proficiency **level** *by grade level cluster*
Performance Definitions	Outline how English language learners process and use language for each **level** of language proficiency *in grades K-12*
Can Do Descriptors	Describe how English language learners process and use language for each **language domain** and level of language proficiency *by grade level cluster*
Speaking and Writing Rubrics	Document how English language learners process and use language in the domain of **speaking** or **writing** for each **level** of language proficiency based on three criteria: linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage, and language control *in grades K-12*

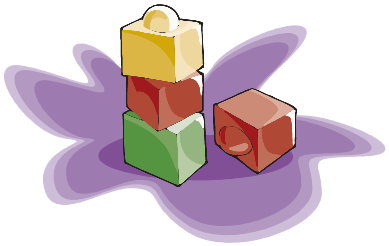
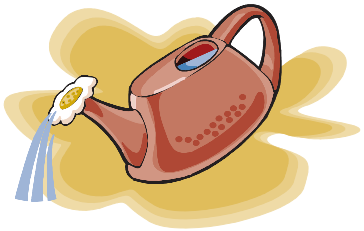
The resources contained in this booklet are intended to support classroom instruction. The **Performance Definitions** (see page 4) provide criteria that shape each of the six levels of English language proficiency. The three bullets within each proficiency level in the Performance Definitions represent:

- **Linguistic Complexity**—the amount and quality of speech or writing for a given situation
- **Vocabulary Usage**—the specificity of words or phrases for a given context
- **Language Control**—the comprehensibility of the communication based on the amount and types of errors

The Performance Definitions provide a concise, global overview of language expectations for each level of English language proficiency. They span the spectrum of grade levels which means that educators must interpret the meaning of the Definitions according to students' cognitive development due to age, their grade level, their diversity of educational experiences, and any diagnosed learning disabilities (if applicable). For example, in level 5, "extended oral or written discourse" would probably be indicated by a 1st grade student's ability to orally retell a story in a series of sentences using simple transition words. However, a middle school student might be expected to exhibit linguistic complexity at level 5 by incorporating a variety of sentence structures in an essay several paragraphs in length. It is important to recognize that the Performance Definitions are the basis for use of other standards-based resources such as the Can Do Descriptors.

The **Can Do Descriptors** (see pages 6-7) are the centerpiece of this booklet, designed to support teachers by providing them with information on the language students are able to understand and produce in the classroom. What is unique about the Can Do Descriptors is that they apply to all five English language proficiency standards, which means they provide an opportunity to link language development across all academic content areas. The Descriptors are intended to be used in tandem with the Performance Definitions. This is because the quantity and quality of language expected at a particular level of language proficiency may not be fully indicated within the Can Do Descriptor for each language domain and proficiency level.

For example, the Can Do Descriptors show that students may be able to *"identify"* at various levels of language proficiency, but the language (linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage, and language control) they use will vary tremendously. At one end of the spectrum, beginning English language learners may *identify* by pointing or using short words or phrases, whereas at the end of the language development continuum, students will begin to *identify* complex themes and ideas described in detailed technical language.

Performance Definitions for the Levels of English Language Proficiency in Grades K-12

At the given level of English language proficiency, English language learners will process, understand, produce, or use:

6 Reaching	• specialized or technical language reflective of the content areas at grade level • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse as required by the specified grade level • oral or written communication in English comparable to English-proficient peers
5 Bridging	• specialized or technical language of the content areas • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays, or reports • oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers when presented with grade-level material
4 Expanding	• specific and some technical language of the content areas • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related sentences, or paragraphs • oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication when presented with oral or written connected discourse with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
3 Developing	• general and some specific language of the content areas • expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs • oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning, when presented with oral or written, narrative, or expository descriptions with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
2 Beginning	• general language related to the content areas • phrases or short sentences • oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede the meaning of the communication when presented with one- to multiple-step commands, directions, questions, or a series of statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
1 Entering	• pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas • words, phrases, or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH-, choice, or yes/no questions, or statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support • oral language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede meaning when presented with basic oral commands, direct questions, or simple statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support

Grade Level Cluster Can Do Descriptors

The grade level cluster Can Do Descriptors have been created by teachers, primarily for teachers, who work with English language learners throughout the consortium. During 2007-08, over 900 teachers and administrators participated in refining and validating five grade level clusters of Descriptors from the original document spanning the K-12 spectrum. These Descriptors for the four language domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—and five levels of English language proficiency are based on the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards.

Interpretation of the Can Do Descriptors
To maintain the succinctness of the individual statements, some basic assumptions need to be made in interpreting the Can Do Descriptors.

1. Sensory, graphic, or interactive support are present through language proficiency level 4, Expanding.
2. English language learners can process or produce the **language** associated with the stated language functions.
3. Linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage, and language control increase incrementally as students move from one English language proficiency level to the next.

The Can Do Descriptors are a sampling of the language expectations of English language learners as they travel along the continuum of English language development. Unlike the strands of model performance indicators that scaffold across levels of language proficiency, the Can Do Descriptors function independently within a given level of language proficiency.

Uses for the Can Do Descriptors

The Can Do Descriptors are a resource, in addition to the English language proficiency standards, to use in classrooms with English language learners. As an instructional assessment tool, language teachers may:

- Share the Descriptors with classroom teachers and administrators to describe the second language acquisition process around the levels of English language proficiency
- Provide resource teachers, such as Title I or literacy coaches, additional information about English language learners
- Use to plan with tutors or mentors who work with English language learners
- Develop or co-develop lessons and units of study with differentiated language objectives
- Set language goals with their English language learners*
- Explain to parents students' progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing*
- Suggest language goals to be incorporated into Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for English language learners with diagnosed disabilities
- Translate English language proficiency test scores (i.e., ACCESS for ELLs®, W-APT™, and WIDA MODEL™) into classroom practice
- Observe and note levels of student performance as a precursor to using WIDA Speaking and Writing Rubrics for formative assessment
- Use the Descriptors to advocate on behalf of English language learners

** For these uses, the Can Do Descriptors are also available in Spanish on pp. 8-11 of this booklet.*

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Can Do Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster PreK-K

For the given level of English language proficiency and with visual, graphic, or interactive support through Level 4, English language learners can process or produce the **language** needed to:

	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	
LISTENING	• Match oral language to classroom and everyday objects • Point to stated pictures in context • Respond non-verbally to oral commands or statements (e.g., through physical movement) • Find familiar people and places named orally	• Sort pictures or objects according to oral instructions • Match pictures, objects or movements to oral descriptions • Follow one-step oral directions (e.g., "stand up"; "sit down") • Identify simple patterns described orally • Respond with gestures to songs, chants, or stories modeled by teachers	• Follow two-step oral directions, one step at a time • Draw pictures in response to oral instructions • Respond non-verbally to confirm or deny facts (e.g., thumbs up, thumbs down) • Act out songs and stories using gestures	• Find pictures that match oral descriptions • Follow oral directions and compare with visual or nonverbal models (e.g., "Draw a circle under the line.") • Distinguish between what happens first and next in oral activities or readings • Role play in response to stories read aloud	• Order pictures of events according to sequential language • Arrange objects or pictures according to descriptive oral discourse • Identify pictures/realia associated with grade-level academic concepts from oral descriptions • Make patterns from real objects or pictures based on detailed oral descriptions	**Level 6 - Reaching**
SPEAKING	• Identify people or objects in illustrated short stories • Repeat words, simple phases • Answer yes/no questions about personal information • Name classroom and everyday objects	• Restate some facts from illustrated short stories • Describe pictures, classroom objects or familiar people using simple phrases • Answer questions with one or two words (e.g., "Where is Sonia?") • Complete phrases in rhymes, songs, and chants	• Retell short narrative stories through pictures • Repeat sentences from rhymes and patterned stories • Make predictions (e.g. "What will happen next?") • Answer explicit questions from stories read aloud (e.g., who, what, or where)	• Retell narrative stories through pictures with emerging detail • Sing repetitive songs and chants independently • Compare attributes of real objects (e.g., size, shape, color) • Indicate spatial relations of real-life objects using phrases or short sentences	• Tell original stories with emerging detail • Explain situations (e.g., involving feelings) • Offer personal opinions • Express likes, dislikes, or preferences with reasons	

The Can Do Descriptors work in conjunction with the WIDA Performance Definitions of the English language proficiency standards. The Performance Definitions use three criteria (1. linguistic complexity; 2. vocabulary usage; and 3. language control) to describe the increasing quality and quantity of students' language processing and use across the levels of language proficiency.

Can Do Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster PreK-K

For the given level of English language proficiency and with visual, graphic, or interactive support through Level 4, English language learners can process or produce the **language** needed to:

	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	
READING	• Match icons and symbols to corresponding pictures • Identify name in print • Find matching words or pictures • Find labeled real-life classroom objects	• Match examples of the same form of print • Distinguish between same and different forms of print (e.g., single letters and symbols) • Demonstrate concepts of print (e.g., left to right movement, beginning/end, or top/bottom of page) • Match labeled pictures to those in illustrated scenes	• Use pictures to identify words • Classify visuals according to labels or icons (e.g., animals v. plants) • Demonstrate concepts of print (e.g., title, author, illustrator) • Sort labeled pictures by attribute (e.g., number, initial sound)	• Identify some high-frequency words in context • Order a series of labeled pictures described orally to tell stories • Match pictures to phrases/ short sentences • Classify labeled pictures by two attributes (e.g., size and color)	• Find school-related vocabulary items • Differentiate between letters, words, and sentences • String words together to make short sentences • Indicate features of words, phrases, or sentences that are the same and different	**Level 6 - Reaching**
WRITING	• Draw pictures and scribble • Circle or underline pictures, symbols, and numbers • Trace figures and letters • Make symbols, figures or letters from models and realia (e.g., straws, clay)	• Connect oral language to print (e.g., language experience) • Reproduce letters, symbols, and numbers from models in context • Copy icons of familiar environmental print • Draw objects from models and label with letters	• Communicate using letters, symbols, and numbers in context • Make illustrated "notes" and cards with distinct letter combinations • Make connections between speech and writing • Reproduce familiar words from labeled models or illustrations	• Produce symbols and strings of letters associated with pictures • Draw pictures and use words to tell a story • Label familiar people and objects from models • Produce familiar words/phrases from environmental print and illustrated text	• Create content-based representations through pictures and words • Make "story books" with drawings and words • Produce words/phrases independently • Relate everyday experiences using phrases/short sentences	

The Can Do Descriptors work in conjunction with the WIDA Performance Definitions of the English language proficiency standards. The Performance Definitions use three criteria (1. linguistic complexity; 2. vocabulary usage; and 3. language control) to describe the increasing quality and quantity of students' language processing and use across the levels of language proficiency.

Descripción de Habilidades: Grados Escolares PreK-K

Dado el nivel de desempeño en inglés y apoyados de gráficos, apoyos visuales, y apoyos interactivos hasta el Nivel 4, los estudiantes de inglés pueden procesar o producir **el lenguaje** que se necesita para hacer lo siguiente:

	Nivel 1 Entrando	Nivel 2 Emergiendo	Nivel 3 Desarrollando	Nivel 4 Extendiendo	Nivel 5 Conectando	
ESCUCHAR	• Emparejar lenguaje oral con objetos en el salón de clase y objetos diarios • Señalar dibujos mencionados de un contexto • Responder a instrucciones verbales con movimientos físicos • Encontrar personas familiares en lugares descritos verbalmente	• Clasificar dibujos u objetos siguiendo instrucciones verbales • Emparejar dibujos, objetos, o movimientos con instrucciones verbales • Seguir instrucciones verbales de un paso (ejemplo: párate, siéntate) • Identificar patrones/ pautas simples descritos/as verbalmente • Responder con gestos a canciones o cuentos modelados por el maestro	• Seguir instrucciones verbales de dos pasos un paso al tiempo • Hacer dibujos como respuesta a instrucciones verbales • Responder con movimientos físicos para confirmar o negar hechos (ejemplo: mover la cabeza para indicar sí o no) • Actuar canciones y cuentos con gestos	• Encontrar dibujos siguiendo descripciones verbales • Seguir instrucciones verbales y compararlas a visuales o modelos no verbales (ejemplo: “Dibuja un círculo debajo de la línea”) • Distinguir entre lo que pasa antes o después en actividades verbales o cuentos • Actuar en respuesta a cuentos leídos en voz alta	• Ordenar dibujos de eventos de acuerdo a lenguaje secuencial • Organizar objetos o dibujos de acuerdo a discurso descriptivo • Identificar dibujos de descripciones verbales asociados con conceptos académicos de acuerdo al nivel escolar • Hacer patrones de objetos reales o dibujos basados en descripciones verbales detalladas	**Nivel 6 - Alcanzando**

Los Descriptores Can Do trabajan en conjunto con Las Descripciones WIDA de las Habilidades en los niveles de lenguaje académico de las normas de desempeño del lenguaje inglés, los cuales usan tres criterios (1. complejidad lingüística; 2. uso de vocabulario; y 3. control del lenguaje) para describir la calidad y la cantidad incremental del procesamiento y uso de lenguaje a través de los diferentes niveles de desempeño.

Descripción de Habilidades: Grados Escolares PreK-K

Dado el nivel de desempeño en inglés y apoyados de gráficos, apoyos visuales, y apoyos interactivos hasta el Nivel 4, los estudiantes de inglés pueden procesar o producir **el lenguaje** que se necesita para hacer lo siguiente:

	Nivel 1 Entrando	Nivel 2 Emergiendo	Nivel 3 Desarrollando	Nivel 4 Extendiendo	Nivel 5 Conectando	
HABLAR	• Identificar personas u objetos en cuentos cortos ilustrados • Repetir palabras, frases simples • Contestar preguntas de “sí o no” acerca de información personal • Nombrar objetos en el salón y objetos diarios	• Recontar algunos hechos de cuentos cortos ilustrados • Describir dibujos, objetos en el salón o personas familiares usando frases simples • Responder preguntas con una o dos palabras (ejemplo: ¿Dónde está?) • Completar frases en rimas o canciones	• Recontar cuentos cortos narrados a través de dibujos • Repetir oraciones de rimas o cuentos con patrones • Hacer predicciones (ejemplo: “¿Qué pasará después?” • Contestar preguntas específicas de cuentos leídos en voz alta (ejemplo: quién, qué, dónde)	• Recontar cuentos narrativos a través de dibujos detallados • Cantar líricas repetitivas independientemente • Comparar atributos u objetos reales (ejemplo: tamaño, color, forma) • Indicar relación espacial de objetos reales usando frases u oraciones cortas	• Contar cuentos originales con detalles emergentes • Explicar situaciones (ejemplo: incluir sentimientos) • Ofrecer opiniones personales • Expresar con rezones los gustos, disgustos, o preferencias	**Nivel 6 - Alcanzando**

Los Descriptores Can Do trabajan en conjunto con Las Descripciones WIDA de las Habilidades en los niveles de lenguaje académico de las normas de desempeño del lenguaje inglés, los cuales usan tres criterios (1. complejidad lingüística; 2. uso de vocabulario; y 3. control del lenguaje) para describir la calidad y la cantidad incremental del procesamiento y uso de lenguaje a través de los diferentes niveles de desempeño.

Descripción de Habilidades: Grados Escolares PreK-K

Dado el nivel de desempeño en inglés y apoyados de gráficos, apoyos visuales, y apoyos interactivos hasta el Nivel 4, los estudiantes de inglés pueden procesar o producir **el lenguaje** que se necesita para hacer lo siguiente:

	Nivel 1 Entrando	Nivel 2 Emergiendo	Nivel 3 Desarrollando	Nivel 4 Extendiendo	Level 5 Bridging	
LEER	• Emparejar íconos y símbolos con los dibujos que corresponden • Identificar el nombre escrito • Encontrar palabras y dibujos que emparejan • Encontrar objetos de vida real en el salón	• Emparejar ejemplos de la misma escritura • Distinguir entre diferentes tipos de escritura (ejemplo: letras y símbolos) • Demostrar conceptos de escritura (ejemplo: movimiento de izquierda a derecha, principio/fin o la parte de arriba/abajo de la página) • Emparejar dibujos etiquetados con los que están ilustrados	• Usar dibujos para identificar palabras • Clasificar visuales de acuerdo a etiquetas o íconos (ejemplo: animales versus plantas) • Demostrar conceptos de escritura (ejemplo: título, autor, ilustrador) • Clasificar dibujos etiquetados por atributo (ejemplo: número, inicial, sonido)	• Identificar algunas palabras con alta frecuencia en un contexto • Ordenar una serie de dibujos etiquetados descritos verbalmente para contar cuentos • Emparejar dibujos con frases/oraciones cortas • Clasificar dibujos etiquetados por dos atributos (ejemplo: tamaño y color)	• Encontrar vocabulario relacionado con la escuela • Diferenciar entre dos letras, palabras y oraciones • Juntar palabras para hacer oraciones cortas • Indicar características de palabras, frases, u oraciones que son iguales y diferentes	**Nivel 6 - Alcanzando**

Los Descriptores Can Do trabajan en conjunto con Las Descripciones WIDA de las Habilidades en los niveles de lenguaje académico de las normas de desempeño del lenguaje inglés, los cuales usan tres criterios (1. complejidad lingüística; 2. uso de vocabulario; y 3. control del lenguaje) para describir la calidad y la cantidad incremental del procesamiento y uso de lenguaje a través de los diferentes niveles de desempeño.

Descripción de Habilidades: Grados Escolares PreK-K

Dado el nivel de desempeño en inglés y apoyados de gráficos, apoyos visuales, y apoyos interactivos hasta el Nivel 4, los estudiantes de inglés pueden procesar o producir **el lenguaje** que se necesita para hacer lo siguiente:

	Nivel 1 Entrando	Nivel 2 Emergiendo	Nivel 3 Desarrollando	Nivel 4 Extendiendo	Level 5 Bridging	
ESCRIBIR	• Dibujar y escribir garabatos • Circular o subrayar palabras, símbolos y números • Trazar figuras y letras • Hacer símbolos, figuras, o letras de objetos diarios (ejemplo: hacer algo de plastilina)	• Conectar lenguaje oral con lo escrito • Reproducir letras, símbolos, y números siguiendo modelos en un contexto • Copiar íconos conocidos de la escritura en el medioambiente • Dibujar objetos siguiendo modelos y etiquetar con letras	• Comunicarse usando letras, símbolos, y números de un contexto • Hacer "cartas" ilustradas con combinaciones de letras • Hacer conexiones entre lo hablado y lo escrito • Reproducir palabras conocidas de ilustraciones etiquetadas	• Producir símbolos y letras que son asociados con dibujos • Dibujar y usar palabras para contar un cuento • Etiquetar personas y objetos conocidos de un modelo • Producir palabras/ frases conocidas de ilustraciones y escritura del medioambiente	• Crear representaciones con contenidos académicos a través de dibujos y palabras • Hacer "libros de cuentos" con dibujos y palabras • Producir palabras/frases independientemente • Recontar experiencias de la vida diaria usando frases/oraciones cortas	**Nivel 6 - Alcanzando**

Los Descriptores Can Do trabajan en conjunto con Las Descripciones WIDA de las Habilidades en los niveles de lenguaje académico de las normas de desempeño del lenguaje inglés, los cuales usan tres criterios (1. complejidad lingüística; 2. uso de vocabulario; y 3. control del lenguaje) para describir la calidad y la cantidad incremental del procesamiento y uso de lenguaje a través de los diferentes niveles de desempeño.

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