



Nebraska Department of Education
English Language Arts & English Language Proficiency Standards Alignment

Introduction

Nebraska adopted new English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards in December 2013. These standards reflect the increased language demands across content areas and are designed to complement and support new college- and career-ready content standards. The 10 standards are the same across all grade clusters (see p.8). The proficiency level descriptors for each grade cluster and standard show the progression of skill attainment. The English Language Arts (ELA) college- and career- ready standards were adopted in Nebraska in September 2014. These standards foster deeper thinking, encourage innovation and require students to support thinking with evidence. In the spring of 2017, NDE convened a group of ELL and ELA teachers and administrators to conduct a standards alignment for the two sets of standards. The goals for this alignment work were to meet federal requirements for standards alignment under 1111(b)(F)(iii), create a useful resource for teachers working with English Learners (ELs), and focus on standards that may be more challenging for ELs.

Supporting English Learners in the Content Classroom

In Nebraska, districts implement various types of program models, called language instruction educational programs (LIEPs), to serve English Learners. In fact, many districts have more than one program model within their district. For this reason, ELs with varying levels of English proficiency will be in general education classrooms and will need different types of supports to access grade-level content. The ELP standards describe five levels of proficiency. For the purpose of this alignment, the levels have been collapsed into three levels of proficiency (emerging, progressing, and nearly proficient). This document includes proficiency level descriptions for English Learners and options for supporting students at each level.

English Learners can better access grade-level content when teachers supply classroom supports to their lessons. This document contains general supports by proficiency level that classroom teachers should consider providing to English Learners. They are grouped by ELA domain: comprehension, writing, and reciprocal communication. Depending on the lesson and the skills of the student, some of these supports may be more appropriate than others. In addition, a column has been added for older learners (grades 6-12). While these supports may be appropriate for any English Learner, it is important to recognize that older English learners may need more support because of the increased grade-level skills expected while students are developing English skills. For more lesson-specific supports, see the page referring to the NDE Standards Instructional Tool.

Q&A: Supporting English Learners in the General Classroom

Q: How do I know the proficiency level of an English Learner in my class?

A: It is important to learn the proficiency level of the English Learners (ELs) in your class. The staff in charge of the English Learner program in your district or school can help you obtain this information. Included in this document are descriptions of general profiles that may inform teachers of the productive and receptive skills of students. Please note that levels of proficiency are fluid and at any point a student may demonstrate more or less proficiency in different domains.

Q: How long will English learners be in each level?

A: Students move through proficiency levels at various timelines. Typically, students will be at lower levels of proficiency for a shorter period of time and stay at a progressing level for more time. However, many factors influence student's proficiency levels including, but not limited to: age, prior schooling, initial English proficiency level, etc.

Q: How do I know which supports are appropriate?

A: First, talk with someone in the district on the ELL team who understands language acquisition. They can provide information around supporting students in the classroom. Teachers can use this as a guide for providing supports during their lessons. This document provides general supports that may be appropriate for lessons in comprehension, writing, and reciprocal communication. There are also sample lessons that include more specific supports appropriate for ELs at particular grade bands.

Q: How long should English learners get supports?

A: That depends on the student. Supports are meant to be applied on an individual basis to help students access grade level content and should be gradually removed as students demonstrate grade level knowledge and skills.

Q: What does it mean that an English Learner is proficient?

A: A student is proficient when he or she has attained a level of English language skills necessary to independently produce, interpret, collaborate on, and succeed in grade-level content. That is demonstrated by a score of proficient (a score of all 4's and 5's) on the NE English Language Proficiency Assessment, the ELPA21.

Q: Is it still appropriate to provide supports to English Learners who are proficient?

A: Yes. The lessons here do not include supports for proficient students since they are aligned to the ELP standards. However, proficient students, while no longer receiving supports from the English language program, may still need support in the general education classroom. For example, students may still need support accessing academic vocabulary and content-specific knowledge and skills.

Proficiency Level Descriptions for English Learners

Emerging	Progressing	Nearly Proficient
<p>Students are emerging when :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are working on tasks related to ELP levels of 1-2. • They are just beginning to develop grade-level English language skills. • They have minimal to limited comprehension in English without support. • They may understand some words simple sentences but production is limited. 	<p>Students are progressing when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are working on tasks related to ELP levels 2-3 (maybe some 4s). • They are developing grade-level English language skills. • They have fair to good comprehension in English without support. • They understand and produce more accurate English but may make errors. • They are working towards producing complex English structures in writing or speaking. 	<p>Students are nearly proficient when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are working on tasks related to ELP levels 3-4 (mostly 4's). • They are nearing grade-level English language skills • They have strong comprehension in English without support. • They understand and produce accurate English with few errors. • They are mostly producing complex academic language skills.

Supports for English Learners in English Language Arts

Comprehension lessons: Based on the ELA_ELP Alignment, these supports are suggested considerations when working with students on standards related to reading comprehension.

Emerging Students	Progressing Students	Nearly Proficient Students	Older students
<p>Use visuals and/or gestures to explain topics, concepts, ideas, vocabulary words, etc.</p> <p>Have student to respond to questions nonverbally (pointing, drawing) or with short responses (one-two words).</p> <p>Provide sentence starters or sentence frames for student responses (orally and written).</p> <p>Have student demonstrate knowledge in a different way.</p> <p>Provide additional teacher modeling, samples, examples, anchor charts, lists of important words, etc.</p>	<p>Provide sentence starters or sentence frames for student responses (orally and written).</p> <p>Provide word bank or chart of important content features/structures (i.e. transition words, characteristics of nonfiction or fiction text, grammar structures, etc.).</p> <p>Provide multiple opportunities to read and interact with text.</p> <p>Provide opportunities to reflect and discuss before responding to text.</p> <p>Work with a partner to complete activity.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities to reflect, discuss, and elaborate before responding to text (provide sentence frames if needed).</p> <p>Provide word bank or chart of content features/structures.</p>	<p>Build background knowledge as needed.</p> <p>Pre-teach “content” vocabulary. Provide key academic language.</p> <p>Provide modified or levels texts (at appropriate level for student).</p> <p>Provide native language support or resources.</p> <p>Provide samples of expected outcome.</p>

Supports for English Learners in English Language Arts

Writing lessons: Based on the ELA_ELP Alignment, these supports are suggested considerations when working with students on standards related to writing processes and writing modes.

Emerging Students	Progressing Students	Nearly Proficient Students	Older students
<p>Provide anchor charts with important content-specific information (e.g. parts of speech, transition words, etc.).</p> <p>Use sentence starters and sentence frames to support discussion and writing.</p> <p>Build background knowledge (use graphic organizer to brainstorm ideas).</p> <p>Have student write about a familiar topic.</p> <p>Have student demonstrate knowledge in different ways. Examples: -student illustrates response -point to response -order responses correctly</p> <p>Use color coding system to organize content specific information. Examples: - parts of speech -main idea/ details -examples/non examples -claim/evidence</p>	<p>Provide opportunities to build background knowledge and discuss ideas before writing.</p> <p>Provide sentences starters/sentence frames and transitions words (if appropriate).</p> <p>Have student practice skills before writing with sample texts or graphic organizers (e.g. put a sample paragraph in order with claims and evidence).</p> <p>Provide anchor charts/lists/word bank (with content specific vocabulary).</p>	<p>Build background knowledge around the topic.</p> <p>Provide time to discuss and brainstorm ideas before writing.</p> <p>Provide anchor charts/lists/word bank (with content specific vocabulary).</p>	<p>Use appropriately leveled text and other resources.</p> <p>Provide supplemental/leveled resources in advance.</p> <p>Provide student with multiple opportunities to discuss keywords and topics.</p> <p>Work with student individually to create responses until student is ready to work independently.</p> <p>Provide translations and bilingual dictionaries, if appropriate.</p>

Supports for English Learners in English Language Arts

Reciprocal Communication lessons: Based on the ELA_ELP Alignment, these supports are suggested considerations when working with students on standards related to speaking and listening.

Emerging Students	Progressing Students	Nearly Proficient Students	Older students
<p>Provide pictures and visuals of topics being discussed.</p> <p>Have students work cooperatively to develop ideas before sharing.</p> <p>Teacher provides supports for discussion: -sentence starters/sentence frames -Graphic organizers to organize discussion -List of important keywords</p> <p>Utilize familiar topics/build background knowledge.</p> <p>Have student respond using one or two word answers.</p> <p>Provide opportunities to practice response.</p>	<p>Provide supports like sentence frames, connecting words, sentences starters, etc.</p> <p>Have student respond in simple sentences.</p> <p>Utilize familiar topics and/or build background knowledge.</p> <p>Practice with a partner or teacher before responding.</p> <p>Repeat, rephrase, and model directions/instructions.</p>	<p>Provide resources to students to complete assignment: -word bank -sentence stems/ sentence frames -graphic organizer -bilingual dictionary (if student has literacy in first language)</p> <p>Build background knowledge.</p> <p>Provide exemplars of expected outcome.</p> <p>Have student practice before responding.</p>	<p>Provide controlled, leveled sources for students to build background knowledge.</p> <p>Limit number of resources that are at appropriate levels (if researching or building background knowledge).</p> <p>Work one-on-one with student to prepare for discussion or response in advance.</p> <p>Modify student outcome while maintaining lesson objective (i.e. fewer questions, shorter speech, less time).</p>

NDE English Language Arts Standards Instructional Tool

The ELA Standards Instructional Tool (SIT) is a repository of teaching strategies aligned to and organized by the Nebraska ELA Standards: Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening, and Multiple Literacies.

The ELA_ELP standards alignment process utilized the ELA SIT as a framework for English learner supports in the ELA classroom. As a result, the group contextualized 8 strategies that include specific supports at three levels of proficiency (emerging, progressing, and nearly proficient) for a particular strategy. These are meant to help ELA teachers implement specific supports for ELs during their lesson. A list and link to the specific SIT tools with EL supports can be found here. For a complete list of all sample SIT tools with EL supports, click [here](#).

Reading Comprehension

Standard	Teacher Strategy	Grade band
LA 10.1.6.a	Close Reading	K , 1 , 2-3 , 4-5 , 6-8 , 9-12
LA 10.1.6.d	Something Happened, But, So	K , 1 , 2-3 , 4-5 , 6-8 , 9-12
LA 10.1.6.i	QAR	K , 1 , 2-3 , 4-5 , 6-8 , 9-12

Writing

Standard	Teacher Strategy	Grade band
LA 10.2.1.b	Writing Organizer	1 , 2-3 , 4-5 , 6-8 , 9-12
LA 10.2.1.d	Accordion Paragraphing	K , 2-3 , 4-5
LA 10.2.2.e	Sentence Imitation	2-3 , 4-5 , 6-8 , 9-12

Reciprocal Communication

Standard	Teacher Strategy	Grade band
LA 10.3.3.c	Four Corners	K , 1 , 2-3 , 4-5 , 6-8 , 9-12
LA 10.3.3.d	iChart	2-3 , 4-5 , 6-8 , 9-12

English Language Proficiency Standards

The 10 ELP Standards highlight and amplify the critical language, knowledge about language, and skills using language that are necessary for ELs to be successful in schools. An ELL can...

1	construct meaning from oral presentations and literacy and informational text through grade-appropriate listening, reading, and viewing
2	participate in grade-appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas, and analyses, responding to peer, audience, or reader comments and questions
3	speak and write about grade- appropriate complex literacy and informational texts and topics
4	construct grade- appropriate oral and written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence
5	conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings to answer questions or solve problems
6	analyze and critique the arguments of others orally and in writing
7	adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing
8	determine the meaning of words and phrases in oral presentations and literary and informational text
9	create clear and coherent grade- appropriate speech and text
10	make accurate use of standard English to communicate in grade- appropriate speech and writing

Nebraska ELA_ELP Standards Matrix

ELA Standards	English Language Proficiency Standards									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Reading Comprehension										
LA 1.6.a Author's purpose	X			X		X		X		
LA 1.6.d Retell and summarize	X		X					X	X	
LA 1.6.i Answer questions and support with evidence from text	X	X		X	X					
Writing										
LA 2.1.b Generate a draft (writing process) appropriate for grade-level				X		X	X		X	X
LA 2.1.d Compose a paragraph with rule of grammar appropriate for grade-level				X			X		X	X
LA 2.2.e Analyze various mentor texts and/or exemplars in order to create a similar piece							X		X	X
Reciprocal Communication										
LA 3.3.c Apply conversations strategies to recognize and consider new information in relationship to one's own ideas		X		X		X	X		X	
La 3.3.d Listen, ask clarifying questions, and consider information to generate new ideas and challenge assumptions to a topic, text, or issue under study		X			X					

Thank you to all who contributed to this important work. The following educators participated in the Nebraska Department of Education’s ELA_ELP Standards Alignment work. They helped to contextualize the SIT tool lessons to specific grades as well as inform the work around appropriate supports for each lesson.

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