

Language Acquisition Chart for English Language Learners (ELLs)

Official Name	Definition	Student Behaviors	Challenges	Teaching strategies
1. Entering (Formerly Beginning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may not be ready to actively produce <u>or</u> may attend to hands-on language demonstrations with more understanding • Listening and responding in non-verbal ways to show understanding or may initiate conversation by pointing or using single words <u>or</u> may initiate conversation by pointing or using single words • Very limited comprehension/vocabulary • 0 – 1,000 receptive word vocabulary • Adjusting to U.S. culture <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NYSED Definition</u> <i>A student at this English language proficiency level relies heavily on teacher supports and instructional scaffolds to advance his or her academic language skills. As measured by the NYSITELL or the NYSESLAT, a student at this level has yet to meet the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts within his or her grade level.</i></p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Able to: observe, locate, label, match, show, classify, name, categorize, recall, draw, list, record, point out, underline, organize</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends heavily on context • Has minimal receptive vocabulary • Comprehends keys words • May verbalize key words in isolation after silent period • Indicates comprehension physically (points, draws, gestures, etc.) • Responds with one/two word answer or short phrases after silent period • May appear inattentive • Dependent on modeling and visual and contextual clues to obtain and convey meaning • Mispronunciation/grammar errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following multiple directions, understanding questions, expressing needs, understanding social situations • May be frustrated, withdrawn/low self-esteem, trouble concentrating • Adapting to a new culture, behaviors and values • Prior academic knowledge and experiential background (culture and prior living experiences) • Knowledge and skills required to be successful in American mainstream academic setting may be different from those acquired in native academic setting • Identifying sound-symbol of a new language • Speaks in single words and phrases (may have notable grammatical errors) • Difficulty remembering grammatical rules • Developing sight vocabulary • Faced with cultural assumptions, ideas, values that are unfamiliar and impact learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use manipulatives, visuals, realia, props, games, and gestures • Create climate of acceptance/respect that supports acculturation • Use cooperative learning groups • Require physical response (points, draws, gestures, etc.) to check comprehension • Display print to support oral language • Model activities for students • Use hands-on activities • Emphasize key vocabulary • Adjust rate of speech and enunciation to enhance comprehension • Ask yes/no questions • Avoid idioms • Provide repetition and establish routines • Allow pronunciation variables • Simplify language, not content • Ask students questions that require one/two word responses: who?, what?, which one?, how many? • Lessons that expand vocabulary • Scaffold instruction • Pre-teach academic vocabulary and concepts
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intensive English Language Development (ELD) in social communication as well as in academic language in English ➤ Instruction that focuses using content to develop the new language. ➤ Frequent opportunities to practice their English in social situations as well as academic contexts within the classroom 			
<p><i>** Please note- Students progress at independent rates depending on previous schooling, acculturation, and motivation. Students with no previous schooling will take longer to progress through these stages. Most English Language Learners have extensive language ability in their first language.</i></p>				

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<p style="text-align: center;">2. Emerging (Formerly Low Intermediate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students begin speaking in short phrases and simple sentences • Many mistakes in grammar, word order, word usage • Limited comprehension and vocabulary • Up to 3,000 receptive/active word vocabulary <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NYSED Definition</u></p> <p><i>A student at this English language proficiency level relies on teacher supports and instructional scaffolds to advance his or her academic language skills. As measured by the NYSITELL or the NYSESLAT, a student at this level has yet to meet the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts within his or her grade level.</i></p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Able to: tell, describe, restate, compare, question, dramatize, map</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends heavily on context • Continues to depend on teacher supports and instructional scaffolds • Produces phrases or simple sentences • May make some grammatical errors • Demonstrates comprehension by responding orally and in written form (charts, graphs, diagrams) • Functions on a social level • Uses limited vocabulary • Initiates conversation and questions • Comprehension varies on student's literacy development on L1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still makes errors in speaking, reading, and writing in English • May seem more proficient than they are • Conversational fluency vs. developing academic language proficiency • CALP/academic language (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) • Difficulty with tenses and usages • May be confused by idioms, slang • May understand more than they are able to demonstrate • Communication may be impeded by an accent or dialect • May read word for word • May shift from one language to another 	<p>Use Entering teaching strategies and...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List and review instructions step by step • Build on student's prior knowledge • Incorporate more reading and writing • Engage students in producing language such as describing, retelling, comparing, contrasting, summarizing, graphs, charts, diagrams
<p style="text-align: center;">Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intensive English Language Development (ELD) in social communication as well as in academic language in English ➤ Instruction that focuses on content rather than on learning a new language ➤ Frequent opportunities to practice their English in social situations as well as academic contexts within the classroom ➤ Abundant practice in reading materials at their own instructional levels ➤ Direct instruction in fundamental reading skills ➤ Direct teaching vocabulary, morphology, and comprehension ➤ Reading materials that move them along the reading continuum, based on the difficulty level of the selections 			
<p style="text-align: center;">** Please note- Students progress at independent rates depending on previous schooling, acculturation, and motivation. <i>Students with no previous schooling will take longer to progress through these stages. Most English Language Learners have extensive language ability in their first language.</i></p>				

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<p style="text-align: center;">3. Transitioning (Formerly Intermediate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can communicate thoughts more completely, can participate in every day conversations without highly contextualized support • Up to 6,000 receptive/active word vocabulary <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NYSED Definition</u></p> <p><i>A student at this English language proficiency level shows increasing independence in advancing his or her academic language skills. As measured by the NYSITELL or the NYSESLAT, a student at this level has yet to meet the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts within this grade level.</i></p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>May be able to: imagine, create, appraise, contrast, predict, express, report, estimate, evaluate, explain</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on context • Engage in and produce connected narrative (discourse) • Shows good comprehension • Uses expanded vocabulary, fuller richer sentences • Makes complex grammatical errors • Functions somewhat on an academic level • Continues to need visual and contextual support for comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still makes errors in speaking, reading, and writing in English • May seem more proficient than they are • Conversational fluency vs. developing academic language proficiency • CALP/academic Language (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) • Difficulty with tenses and usages • May be confused by idioms, slang • May understand more than they are able to demonstrate • Communication may be impeded by an accent or dialect • May shift from one language to another 	<p>Use Entering, Emerging teaching strategies and ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students brainstorm, list, web, use graphic organizers • Ask questions soliciting opinions, judgment, explanation (more why and how questions) • Introduce figurative language • Develop more academic language (oral and written)
<p style="text-align: center;">Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intensive English Language Development (ELD) in social communication as well as in academic language in English ➤ Instruction that focuses on content rather than on learning a new language ➤ Frequent opportunities to practice their English in social situations as well as academic contexts within the classroom ➤ Abundant practice in reading materials at their own instructional levels ➤ Direct instruction in fundamental reading skills ➤ Direct teaching vocabulary, morphology, and comprehension ➤ Reading materials that move them along the reading continuum, based on the difficulty level of the selections 			
<p style="text-align: center;">** Please note- Students progress at independent rates depending on previous schooling, acculturation, and motivation. <i>Students with no previous schooling will take longer to progress through these stages. Most English Language Learners have extensive language ability in their first language.</i></p>				

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<p style="text-align: center;">4. Expanding (Formerly Advanced)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have advanced skills in cognitive/academic language • Up to 12,000 receptive/active word vocabulary <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NYSED Definition</u></p> <p><i>A student at this English language proficiency level shows great independence in advancing his or her academic language skills. As measured by the NYSITELL or the NYSESLAT, a student at this level is approaching the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts within this grade level.</i></p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>May be able to: relate, infer, illustrate, judge, demonstrate, hypothesize, outline, revise, justify, critique, summarize, suppose, verify, rewrite, assess</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains two-way conversations • Uses more complex grammatical structures • Demonstrates comprehension in contextualized situations • Uses academic vocabulary with few errors • Approaching the linguistic demands of grade-level contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May still demonstrate difficulty with fluency due to vocabulary and word finding difficulties • Instructional reading level may be lower than grade level • May seem fluent but needs to expand vocabulary and CALP/academic language • Still developing grammar and usage 	<p>Use Entering, Emerging, Transitioning teaching strategies and ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate note-taking skills • Study skills • Test-taking skills • Demonstrate how to verify answers (oral and written) • Expand figurative language (idioms)
<p style="text-align: center;">Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intensive English Language Development (ELD) in social communication as well as in academic language in English ➤ Instruction that focuses on content rather than on learning a new language ➤ Frequent opportunities to practice their English in social situations as well as academic contexts within the classroom ➤ Abundant practice in reading materials at their own instructional levels ➤ Direct instruction in fundamental reading skills ➤ Direct teaching vocabulary, morphology, and comprehension ➤ Reading materials that move them along the reading continuum, based on the difficulty level of the selections 			
<p><i>** Please note- Students progress at independent rates depending on previous schooling, acculturation, and motivation. Students with no previous schooling will take longer to progress through these stages. Most English Language Learners students have extensive language ability in their first language.</i></p>				

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<p style="text-align: center;">5. Commanding (Formerly Proficient)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>NYSED Definition</u> <i>As measured by the NYSESLAT, a student at this level has met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts within his or her grade level. This student is designated as a Former ELL and is entitled to receive two years of Former ELL services.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficient in the linguistic demands needed to meet grade level requirements • Uses complex grammatical structures • Demonstrates comprehension in decontextualized situations • Uses academic vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May still have difficulty with idioms and figurative language • Academic language may not be as developed as social language • May still demonstrate occasional errors in grammar and usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor student progress for two years • Assign grade-level tasks • Continue to develop cognitive academic language, both oral and written • Provide templates to scaffold academic language for appropriate grade level use • Engage student in higher-order thinking skills
<p style="text-align: center;">Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Instruction that focuses on content rather than on learning a new language ➤ Frequent opportunities to practice their English in social situations as well as academic contexts within the classroom ➤ Abundant practice in reading materials at their own instructional levels ➤ Direct instruction in fundamental reading skills ➤ Direct teaching vocabulary, morphology, and comprehension ➤ Reading materials that move them along the reading continuum, based on the difficulty level of the selections ➤ Provide testing accommodations for two years 			
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>** Please note- Students progress at independent rates depending on previous schooling, acculturation, and motivation. Students with no previous schooling will take longer to progress through these stages. Most English Language Learners have extensive language ability in their first language.</i></p>				