



# WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition

Kindergarten—Grade 12

Promote equity for multilingual learners  
Teach language and content together

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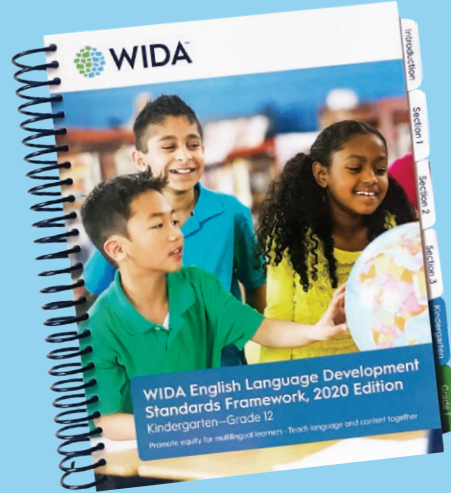
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Version 1.0

# WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition

## *Kindergarten–Grade 12*



These materials are part of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. The 2020 Edition offers several resources to support applications of the Framework, including materials that are geared specifically for grade-level clusters K, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

The complete 2020 Edition includes other useful resources for educators. Section 4, in particular, includes

- Key Language Uses: A Closer Look
- Collaborative Planning for Content and Language Integration: A Jump-Off Point for Curricular Conversations
- A glossary of linguistic terms in the 2020 Edition

Moreover, eight appendices offer valuable information for specific purposes and audiences

- Appendix A: WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition—Meeting ESSA Title 1 Requirements
- Appendix B: Correspondence Tables for Content and Language Standards
- Appendix C: A Compilation of K-12 Key Language Use Distribution Tables and Language Expectations
- Appendix D: A Compilation of K-12 Proficiency Level Descriptors, with Technical Notes
- Appendix E: High-Level Comparison of WIDA Standards Editions From 2004 to 2020
- Appendix F: Theoretical Foundations of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition
- Appendix G: Select References
- Appendix H: Standards Development Process and Acknowledgments

To download a complete copy of the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition, visit the WIDA website at [wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld](http://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld). Or, you can buy a print copy from the WIDA Store, at [www.wceps.org/Store](http://www.wceps.org/Store).



# Welcome to the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition

WIDA has historically grounded its work in language development standards as a driver of equity for multilingual learners in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This new edition reflects a continued commitment to these goals.

Starting in 2004, all editions of the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards have reflected the belief that multilingual learners are best served when they learn content and language together in linguistically and culturally sustaining ways. The 2020 Edition recommits to this belief by maintaining the five original WIDA ELD Standards Statements while adding new and expanded resources to address updates in policy, theory, and practice.

WIDA ELD Standards Statements
<b>English Language Development Standard 1:</b> English language learners communicate for <b>Social and Instructional</b> purposes within the school setting
<b>English Language Development Standard 2:</b> English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Language Arts</b>
<b>English Language Development Standard 3:</b> English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Mathematics</b>
<b>English Language Development Standard 4:</b> English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Science</b>
<b>English Language Development Standard 5:</b> English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Social Studies</b>

## WIDA Mission, Vision, and Values

WIDA draws its strength from its mission, vision, and values—the Can Do Philosophy, innovation, service, collaboration, and social justice. This belief system underscores the cultural, social, emotional, and experiential assets of multilingual learners, their families, and educators. It acts as a unifying force that gives the consortium its strength of conviction and action throughout the PreK-12 education community.

### Mission

WIDA advances academic language development and academic achievement for children and youth who are culturally and linguistically diverse through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional learning for educators.



## From English Language Learners to Multilingual Learners

**Multilingual learners** refers to all children and youth who are, or have been, consistently exposed to multiple languages.

As part of its asset-based belief system, WIDA uses the term “multilingual learners” to describe all students who come in contact with and/or interact in languages in addition to English on a regular basis. They include students who are commonly referred to as English language learners (ELLs), dual language learners (DLLs), newcomers, students with interrupted formal schooling (SIFE), long-term English learners (L-TELEs), English learners with disabilities, gifted and talented English learners, heritage language learners, students with English as an additional language (EAL), and students who speak varieties of English or indigenous languages.

Throughout the field of K-12 education, you will encounter various terms to describe multilingual learners. For example, ESSA (2015) uses the term “English learners” (ELs). For policy purposes, the five original WIDA ELD Standards Statements (2004) maintain the term “English language learners.” However, in an effort to encourage the field to use terminology that is asset-based and inclusive, WIDA began to use the term “multilingual learners.” You will see this term used throughout this document, starting with the Guiding Principles of Language Development on the next page.

## WIDA Guiding Principles of Language Development (2019)

The updated Guiding Principles of Language Development exemplify the overarching and ever-present WIDA Can Do Philosophy and emphasize the importance of language in learning. They highlight the four Big Ideas of the 2020 Edition.

1. Multilingual learners' languages and cultures are valuable resources to be leveraged for schooling and classroom life; leveraging these assets and challenging biases help develop multilingual learners' independence and encourage their agency in learning.
2. Multilingual learners' development of multiple languages enhances their knowledge and cultural bases, their intellectual capacities, and their flexibility in language use.
3. Multilingual learners' language development and learning occur over time through meaningful engagement in activities that are valued in their homes, schools, and communities.
4. Multilingual learners' language, social-emotional, and cognitive development are inter-related processes that contribute to their success in school and beyond.
5. Multilingual learners use and develop language when opportunities for learning take into account their individual experiences, characteristics, abilities, and levels of language proficiency.
6. Multilingual learners use and develop language through activities which intentionally integrate multiple modalities, including oral, written, visual, and kinesthetic modes of communication.
7. Multilingual learners use and develop language to interpret and access information, ideas, and concepts from a variety of sources, including real-life objects, models, representations, and multimodal texts.
8. Multilingual learners draw on their metacognitive, metalinguistic, and metacultural awareness to develop effectiveness in language use.
9. Multilingual learners use their full linguistic repertoire, including translanguaging practices, to enrich their language development and learning.
10. Multilingual learners use and develop language to interpret and present different perspectives, build awareness of relationships, and affirm their identities.

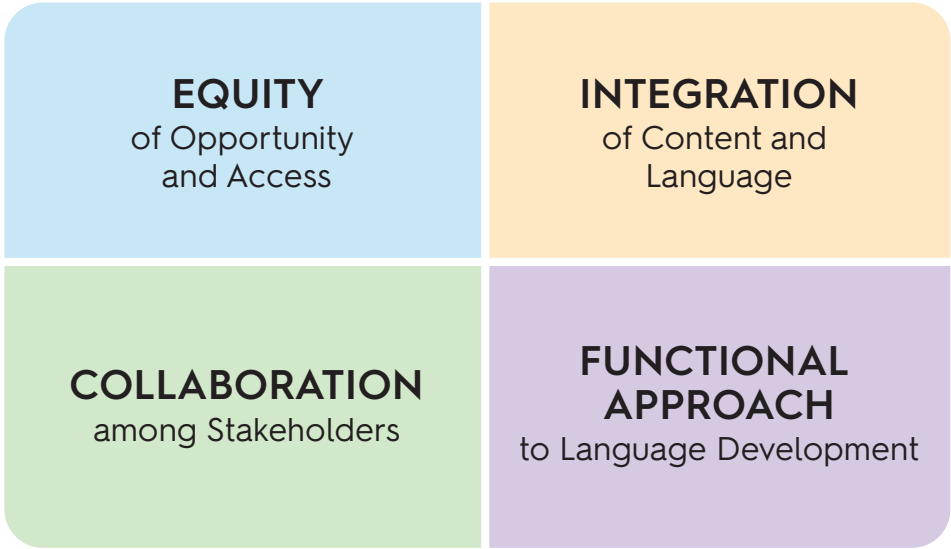




# Big Ideas of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition: Kindergarten–Grade 12

This 2020 Edition of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework is anchored by four **Big Ideas** that are interwoven throughout the document. Like the Can Do Philosophy, they support the design of standards-based educational experiences that are student-centered, culturally and linguistically sustaining, and responsive to multilingual learners’ strengths and needs.

### Big Ideas in the 2020 Edition



## Equity of Opportunity and Access

WIDA’s philosophy is rooted in equity and a commitment to supporting high-quality education for multilingual learners. This support for educational excellence is evident in WIDA’s vision, mission, and values—innovation, service, the Can Do Philosophy, collaboration, and social justice. As a WIDA value, social justice includes creating positive change, challenging discriminatory actions (i.e., in terms of language, culture, and race), and promoting equity to improve the education of multilingual children, youth, and families.

Multilingual learners come from a wide range of cultural, linguistic, educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds and have many physical, social, emotional, experiential, and/or cognitive differences. All bring assets, potential, and resources to schools that educators must leverage to increase equity in standards-based systems. Increasing avenues of access, agency, and equity for all multilingual learners—including newcomers, students with interrupted formal schooling (SIFE), long-term English learners (L-TELEs), students with disabilities, and gifted and talented English learners—requires educators to be knowledgeable, skillful, imaginative, and compassionate.

The 2020 Edition of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework is here to guide educators to

- Set high expectations for all students
- Provide access for multilingual learners to rich, standards-based, grade-level content, including by scaffolding up (see the WIDA website for resources about scaffolding)
- Enact linguistically and culturally sustainable pedagogies
- Create opportunities for multilingual learners to
  - engage actively with each other in deep learning
  - access and use multiple languages, including through translanguaging

When designing and delivering standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment, educators should consider multilingual learners’

- Previous personal and educational experiences
- Recency of arrival in the United States, if applicable
- Diverse cognitive and behavioral strengths, needs, and abilities
- Home and community
- Languages and cultures

Drawing on students’ linguistic and cultural resources is essential to helping them navigate life in a diverse world, in addition to supporting them in meeting demands of academic content areas as they advance through school.

The 2020 Edition of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework upholds the goal of increasing equity for multilingual learners by providing common and visible language expectations in relation to grade-level academic content. These expectations also serve to increase coherence of policy and practice around the education of multilingual learners at federal, state, and local levels.

## Integration of Content and Language

Earlier versions of the WIDA ELD Standards (2004, 2007, 2012) have historically represented the integration of content and language. The 2020 Edition makes the content-language connection more explicit and specific.



By content-language integration, we mean that multilingual learners develop content and language concurrently, with academic content as a context for language learning and language as a means for learning academic content.

The 2020 Edition introduces several new ways of looking at the integration of content and language, for example, through Key Language Uses, Language Expectations, and Correspondence Tables for Content and Language Standards (Appendix B); all these (and more) are introduced later in this document.

**Multimodality**, the use of multiple means of communication, is an essential way for all students to access and engage in the content areas. In addition to the use of spoken and written language, students also communicate through gestures, facial expressions, images, equations, maps, symbols, diagrams, charts, videos, graphs, computer-mediated content, and other means.

In positioning the 2020 Edition to spotlight the variety of ways in which language is used in content area learning, WIDA is drawing educators' attention to multimodality, the use of multiple means of communication. Multimodality is inherent to and essential for how students make meaning and engage in disciplinary practices. All students are able to both interpret and express ideas with greater flexibility when using

multimodal resources, including multiple languages. Multimodality allows all students to use multiple means to engage, interpret, represent, act, and express their ideas in the classroom. For example, as students read, they also might refer to illustrations or diagrams, and as students write, they might also represent their ideas numerically or graphically.

The integration of content and language for multilingual learners promotes

- Understanding the connections between content and language
- Making meaning within and across content areas (disciplines)
- Interaction of students with each other in challenging content activities
- Coordination of design and delivery of curriculum, instruction, and assessment

## Collaboration among Stakeholders

Districts and schools are complex educational systems with collaboration extending across stakeholders from classrooms, to schools, districts, and the families and communities of students. Stakeholders have different areas of expertise and are often responsible for different aspects of educational planning and delivery; however, collectively they are responsible for the success of multilingual learners.

It is crucial for the academic success of multilingual learners that both language and content teachers and administrators see themselves as responsible for fostering the language development of multilingual learners, and for systems to move away from the idea that language specialists alone should assume sole responsibility for students' language development.

**Collaboration among stakeholders** (e.g., district and school leaders, content and language teachers, specialists, support personnel, students, families) is essential for providing multilingual learners high-quality educational experiences that are coordinated and comprehensive.

Although different classrooms may have different instructional foci, all classrooms with multilingual learners must incorporate content and language development. Content teachers bring expertise in their discipline, while language teachers bring expertise in language development. Each teacher can contribute to deliver coordinated educational experiences for multilingual learners according to their own qualifications and areas of expertise. With sustained collaboration, language teachers expand their understanding of different content areas, and content teachers develop insights into and respond to the language development needs of multilingual learners.

Content and language teachers can work together to

- Plan and deliver grade-level standards-based instruction
- Plan for systematic, explicit, and sustained language development alongside the academic demands of the content areas
- Support one another
- Share unique fields of expertise

In this way, multilingual learners and their families benefit from a coherent and shared understanding of expectations and common goals for learning.

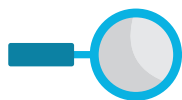
## Functional Approach to Language Development

What does WIDA mean by a functional approach to language development? One metaphor for language is a toolbox, containing different tools that are used to communicate, to develop relationships, and to act upon the world. Like any good toolbox, the language toolbox contains various tools that function for different needs. Particular linguistic tools achieve certain purposes. For example, we make choices with language to reflect the topic at hand, the social roles and identities of those involved (am I talking to a college admissions interviewer or to my best friend?), and the needs of our listeners and readers. We make choices with language to organize our ideas in particular ways, to convey the relationships among these ideas, and about what types of words are most effective for our message. The explicit teaching of how language works can help multilingual learners expand what they can do with language, thereby growing their language toolbox. The result is that students become increasingly aware and strategic in their use of language to negotiate meaning and achieve their purposes in various contexts.

**Language:** a dynamic system used by particular communities for communicating with others. The choices we make with language enable us to accomplish many purposes (e.g., to represent experiences, share ideas, to enact roles and relationships, and act upon the world).

**Language development:** an interactive social process that occurs over time to expand what we *can do* with language.

**Sociocultural context:** the association of language with the culture and community in which it is used. In schools, it refers to the interaction among students and the classroom environment, along with the influences that shape the environment (e.g., purpose, topic, situation, participant's identities and social roles, audience).



*To read more about all these Big Ideas, see the WIDA website.*

# Understanding the WIDA ELD Standards Framework

Underpinned by the four Big Ideas, the WIDA ELD Standards Framework is a language development standards framework for K-12 academic settings.

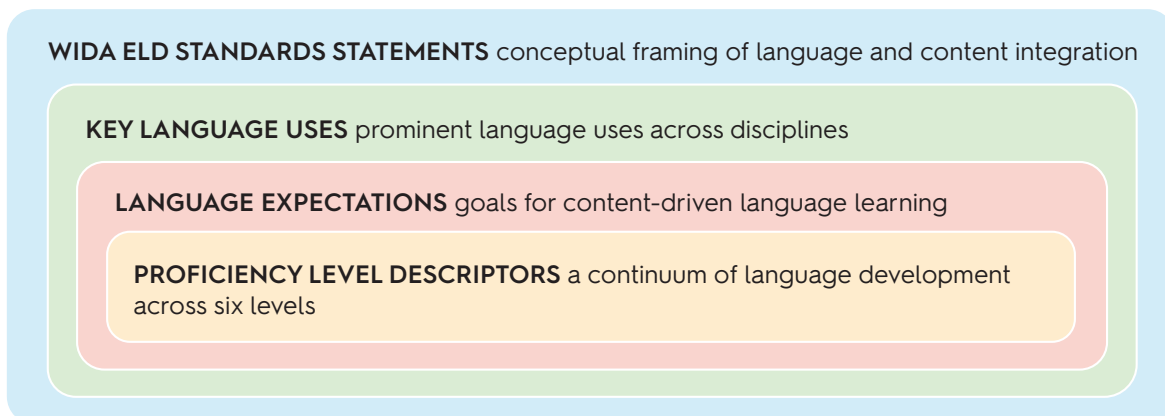
Sometimes people describe a standards framework as being like a map. In the same way that a map points out common, visible landmarks, a standards framework points out common, visible expectations for all students and helps to bring coherence across educational systems. The WIDA ELD Standards Framework is like a map in that it offers language expectations as destination points, as well as road signs to set goals for curriculum, instruction, and assessment for multilingual learners.

The WIDA ELD Standards Framework consists of four components, each explored in the following pages. These four components are like building blocks of language development, and range from broad to narrow in scope. They work together to make a comprehensive picture of language development:

- **Five WIDA ELD Standards Statements** provide the broadest conceptual framing and illustrate the integration of content and language. The standards statements show language use in the service of learning—in other words, language for thinking and doing. They address the language of schooling.
- **Key Language Uses** describe prominent ways that language is used in school, across all disciplines. When educators make choices about how to integrate content and language, the Key Language Uses can help provide focus and coherence.
- **Language Expectations** set goals for content-driven language learning. They add specificity to the ELD Standards Statements and Key Language Uses and make visible the language associated with the content areas. Language Expectations are the statements most similar to what educators generally find in academic content standards.
- **Proficiency Level Descriptors** (PLDs) describe a continuum of language development for activities that target Language Expectations. They provide a detailed articulation of how students might develop language across the six levels of English language proficiency.

The figure below shows the four components of the framework conceptualized as nested building blocks of language development within sociocultural contexts.

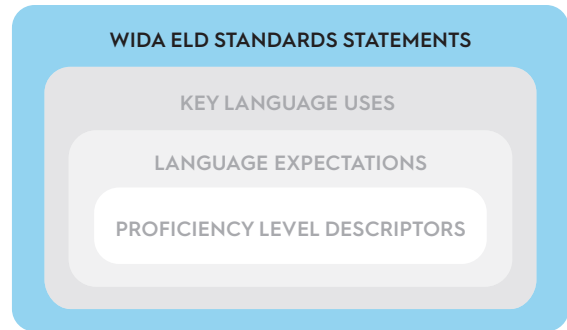
## The Components of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework



## The WIDA ELD Standards Statements

The five standards statements represent the language of schooling and provide the broadest conceptual framing of content and language integration.

Each standard is shown in an abbreviated form in the table below. Hence *ELD Standard 2: English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Arts* is abbreviated as *Language for Language Arts* and its reference code is *ELD-LA*.



Abbreviated forms of the Five English Language Development Standards Statements
<b>ELD Standard 1:</b> Language <b>for</b> Social and Instructional Purposes (ELD-SI)
<b>ELD Standard 2:</b> Language <b>for</b> Language Arts (ELD-LA)
<b>ELD Standard 3:</b> Language <b>for</b> Mathematics (ELD-MA)
<b>ELD Standard 4:</b> Language <b>for</b> Science (ELD-SC)
<b>ELD Standard 5:</b> Language <b>for</b> Social Studies (ELD-SS)

These abbreviated forms point to WIDA’s functional approach to language development, drawing attention to

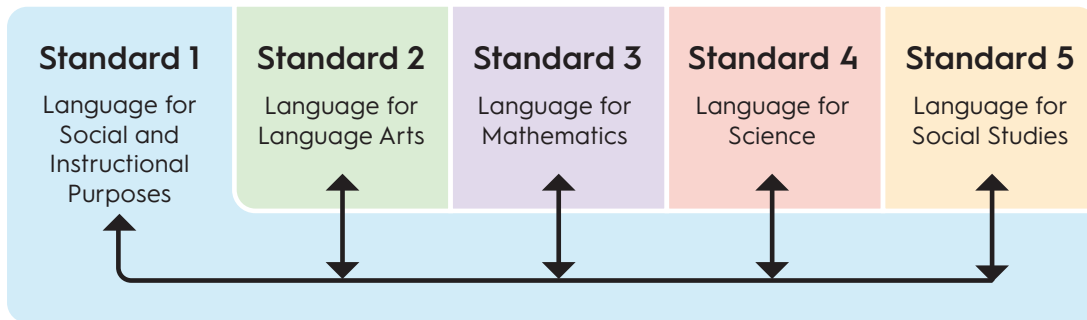
- The dynamic nature of language
- Communicative purposes of the discipline or content area
- The use of language to communicate and make meaning
- Language use in the service of learning—in other words, language for thinking and doing

### Standard 1

ELD Standard 1, Language for Social and Instructional Purposes, is broader in scope and applicability than the other four ELD Standards Statements that are associated with discipline-specific learning. ELD Standard 1 applies across a range of educational settings, and works both independently from and in conjunction with ELD Standards 2-5. Students communicate to learn but also to convey personal needs and wants, to affirm their own identities, and to form and maintain relationships.

ELD Standard 1 encompasses the experiential, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds and identities of multilingual learners in relation to the other ELD Standards. It draws attention to multilingual learners’ positioning in the world that informs their meaning-making in the content areas. It reminds educators of strength-based approaches that meet students where they are in their own contexts, and to bridge the personal, social, and emotional to the academic.

### Relationship among the WIDA ELD Standards



Standard 1 encompasses multilingual learners’ use of language in the following situations:

- **As they expand their linguistic repertoire from English language proficiency level 1 to level 6.** ELD Standard 1 is not just for newcomers and young children, and it is not a precursor to learning disciplinary language. Rather, it encompasses opportunities for multilingual learners to develop language for social and instructional purposes at all language proficiency levels, all grade levels, and in all content areas.
- **Across all disciplines and school settings.** Language for social and instructional purposes is foundational for engagement and learning in every discipline—from core disciplines like language arts and mathematics—to visual and performing arts; health and physical education; cross-disciplinary endeavors like use of technology, and library/media center time; and school-wide activities and events. Language is a part of the entire school day and all educators share responsibility for engaging multilingual learners in rich opportunities to simultaneously learn content and language.
- **Across numerous topics, tasks, and situations.** ELD Standard 1 presents Language Expectations that apply to a range of activities and interactions. Some examples include setting classroom norms; establishing routines; following procedures; asking for clarification; discussing with peers; relating personal ideas, feelings, and views; and exploring languages, cultures, and perspectives.
- **While interacting with others.** Language is, after all, a social practice that is dependent on an awareness of one’s own and others’ identities, as well as the unique roles and purposes that participants have in communicating with different members of a learning community—including peers, teachers, administrators, counselors, paraprofessionals, interpreters, family and community liaisons, other support staff, and visitors to the school. Interactive learning increases opportunities for multilingual learners to engage fully in content learning and leverage their assets as support for their academic achievements.

## Key Language Uses

As part of developing the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition, WIDA researchers analyzed academic content standards, research literature, and disciplinary practices. They also incorporated an understanding of genre families—categories of texts that share specific characteristics, such as purpose, organization, or other similar patterns of language use. From this research, WIDA has identified four Key Language Uses—Narrate, Inform, Explain, and Argue—that can be used to prioritize and organize the integration of content and language.<sup>1</sup>

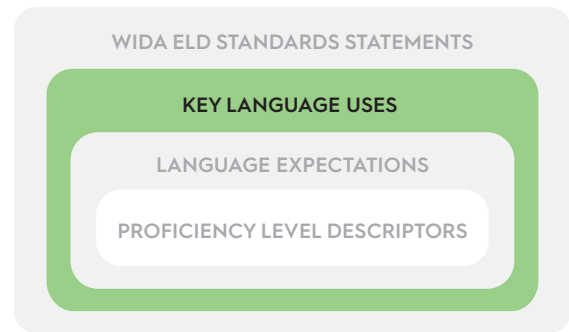
Key Language Uses exemplify the Big Idea: Functional Approach to Language Development. They emphasize language use for particular purposes, with particular audiences, and in particular sociocultural contexts. They

- Bring focus and coherence to the language of schooling
- Help educators make choices to prioritize and coordinate content and language integration
- Serve as an organizing principle for the Language Expectations

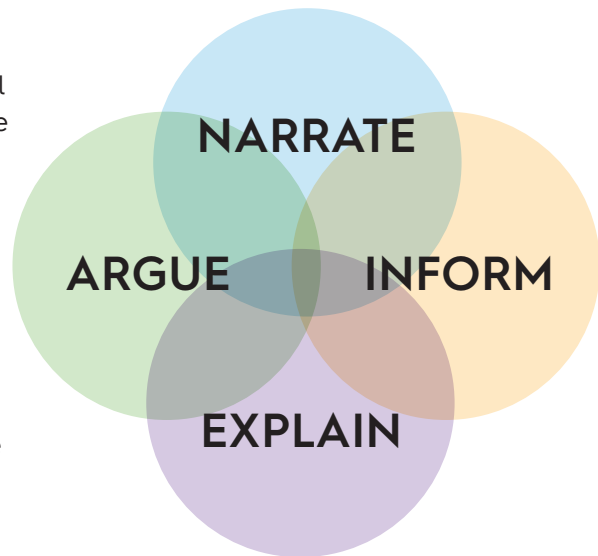
WIDA recognizes that Key Language Uses are one of many different configurations for connecting content to language through standards. The increased emphasis on genre-centered pedagogy (teaching that highlights genres as a way of organizing language use) provides a natural point for collaboration between content and language educators, with Key Language Uses serving as a focus for that partnership.

Key Language Uses share some common aspects across disciplines, and yet each discipline also has unique ways of applying each. Below are brief definitions for each Key Language Use.

- **Narrate** highlights language to convey real or imaginary experiences through stories and histories. Narratives serve many purposes, including to instruct, entertain, teach, or support argumentation.
- **Inform** highlights language to provide factual information. As students convey information, they define, describe, compare, contrast, organize, categorize, or classify concepts, ideas, or phenomena.



Four Key Language Uses



<sup>1</sup> WIDA Key Language Uses have been updated: their definition is refined in the 2020 Edition to mean genre families. “Recount” has been separated into “Narrate” and “Inform.” “Discuss” is not a genre family, but it is threaded throughout all Key Language Uses and applies across all five ELD standards.

- **Explain** highlights language to give an account for how things work or why things happen. As students explain, they substantiate the inner workings of natural, man-made, and social phenomena.
- **Argue** highlights language to justify claims using evidence and reasoning. Argue can be used to advance or defend an idea or solution, change the audience’s point of view, bring about action, or accept a position or evaluation of an issue.

Key Language Uses can overlap and inform each other. Key Language Uses should not be considered strict categorical divisions. As genre families, Key Language Uses can intersect, blend, and build on each other. For example, as students develop complex explanations, they may inform (by naming, defining, describing, or comparing and contrasting something), and even narrate (e.g., by including an anecdote) as they work to help their audiences accurately understand the how or why of a concept (Explain). Narratives can be embedded within other expository structures, such as those in the families of Argue and Explain. Argue can incorporate elements of many Key Language Uses, as it seeks to show an audience the validity of a position or claim.

All Key Language Uses are present across all grade levels and disciplines, and yet at each grade-level cluster and discipline, some are more prominent than others. The emphasis placed on these four Key Language Uses is not intended to restrict curriculum and instruction; rather, it accentuates the most prominent genre families as an organizing principle for the ELD Standards. **The most prominent Key Language Uses are the basis for its Language Expectations.**



*The complete edition of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework provides a deep dive into the features of each Key Language Use across grades and disciplines. Visit Section 4: Resources—Key Language Uses: A Closer Look, and also Appendix C, which shows K-12 distribution tables of the most prominent Key Language Uses by grade-level cluster and WIDA ELD Standard.*

**Genres** are multimodal types of texts (oral, written, visual) that recur frequently for specific purposes, with specific discourse organization and language features (e.g., biographies).

Genres with similar characteristics (e.g., biographies, autobiographies, short stories) can be grouped together into **genre families** (e.g., narrate).

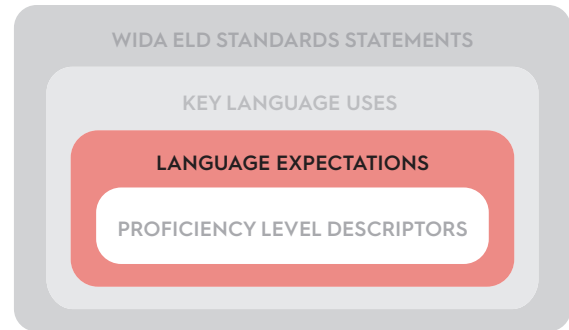
**Key Language Uses** reflect the most high-leverage genre families across academic content standards. They are **Narrate, Inform, Explain, and Argue.**

**Key Language Uses can overlap and inform each other.**  
As genre families, Key Language Uses can intersect, blend, and build on each other.

**All Key Language Uses are present across all grade levels and disciplines.**  
The emphasis placed on these four Key Language Uses is not intended to restrict curriculum and instruction; rather it accentuates the most prominent genre families as an organizing principle for the ELD Standards.

## Language Expectations

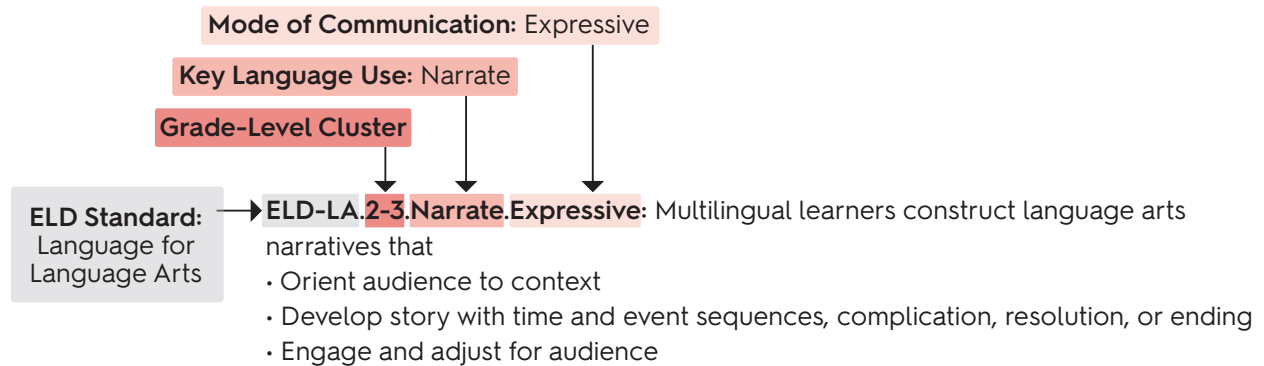
Language Expectations are goals for content-driven language instruction, adding specificity to the ELD Standards Statements and Key Language Uses. They are the statements most similar to what educators generally find in academic content standards. We'd like to call your attention to three aspects of Language Expectations: their reference codes, communication modes, Language Functions, and example Language Features.



### Language Expectations: Reference Code

As illustrated in the figure below, each Language Expectation has a reference code that includes the WIDA ELD Standard Statement (incorporating an academic content area), grade-level cluster, Key Language Use, and communication mode.

#### Example Reference Code for a Language Expectation



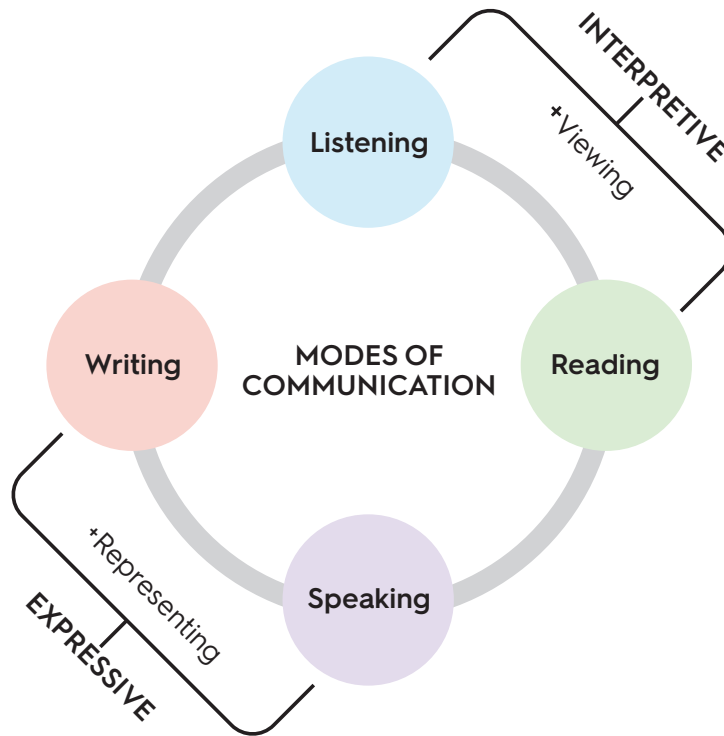
### Language Expectations: Communication Modes

In the Language Expectations, the four individual language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are consolidated into two more inclusive modes of communication: **interpretive** and **expressive**.

- The **interpretive communication mode** encompasses listening, reading, and viewing
- The **expressive communication mode** encompasses speaking, writing, and representing



## Modes of Communication



These two broader modes of communication (interpretive and expressive) increase accessibility options for students and emphasize multimodal forms of communication (namely, by adding viewing in conjunction with listening and reading as well as representing in conjunction with speaking and writing).

### Language Expectations: Language Functions and Features

Developed from a systematic analysis of academic content standards, Language Expectations are built around a set of **Language Functions**. Language Functions are common patterns of language use that showcase particular ways students might use language to meet the purposes of schooling. For example, a series of Language Functions is associated with the process of constructing fictional narratives, informing peers of newly gained knowledge, explaining phenomena, or engaging in scientific argumentation.

**Reminder:** the most *prominent* Key Language Uses are the basis for its Language Expectations.

The table on the next page presents the Language Expectation for ELD-LA.2-3.Narrate.Expressive. It contains three Language Functions that highlight common patterns of language use associated with Language Arts narratives in grades 2-3:

- Orient audience to context
- Develop story with time and event sequences, complication, and resolution
- Engage and adjust for audience

In order to carry out particular Language Functions, language users rely on various language resources, including **Language Features** (e.g., types of sentences, clauses, phrases, and words). Together, the Language Functions and Features form a dynamic and illustrative set that shows some of the ways language works in service of content learning. The table below shows the Language Features that accompany the second Language Function from the Language Expectation ELD-LA.2-3.Narrate.Expressive.

### The Anatomy of a Language Expectation

Language Expectation ELD-LA.2-3.Narrate.Expressive		
Stem	Language Function	Example Language Features
<i>Indicates interpretive or expressive mode</i>	Common patterns of language use associated with Key Language Uses (e.g., stages of the genre)	Sample language resources that carry out specific Language Functions (e.g., different types of sentences, clauses, phrases, and words)
Construct language arts narratives that...	Develop story with time and event sequences, complication, resolution, or ending through...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saying verbs (<i>yelled, said, whispered</i>) to add details about characters in dialogs</li> <li>• Verbs to describe what characters do, think, and feel</li> <li>• Pronouns, renaming, and synonyms to reference characters, situations, or ideas across the text (<i>Miguel=my little brother=he; that night=the worst night</i>)</li> <li>• Connectors to sequence time (<i>first, next, and then</i>), and events (<i>before, after, later</i>), and to combine and link event details (<i>and, but, so</i>)</li> </ul>

This close integration of content and language invites collaboration between content and language educators as they collectively share responsibility for teaching multilingual learners. Language development is its own field of expertise, just as each discipline is. As content and language teachers dive deeper into standards-based planning and delivery of instruction, language specialists can help content teachers learn more about Language Functions and Features. Similarly, content teachers can help language specialists connect to content learning.

## Proficiency Level Descriptors

Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs) are a detailed articulation of multilingual learners' growth in interpretive and expressive language across levels of English language proficiency.

PLDs describe how multilingual learners use language toward the end of each language proficiency level (PL) until they reach PL6. PL6 is open ended: it indicates that for all of us, language development continues throughout life. Each end-of-level descriptor includes and builds on previous proficiency levels (e.g., PL4 = PL1 + PL2 + PL3 + PL4). Educators should scaffold learning and resources across all levels of language proficiency.

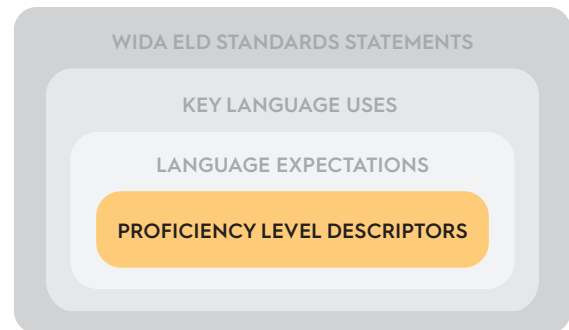
For the purposes of representation and understanding, PLDs describe proficiency in a linear way. However, language development is not a straightforward linear process across proficiency levels; it is contingent on a variety of factors, including multilingual learners' familiarity with the topic, audience, and situation. Therefore, multilingual learners may take various paths to develop and reach Language Expectations.

At any given point along their continua of language development, multilingual learners may demonstrate a range of abilities within and across each proficiency level. For example, they may speak at a higher proficiency level while write at an earlier proficiency level. A proficiency level does not categorize a multilingual learner (e.g., 'a PL1 student'), but, rather, identifies snapshots of what a multilingual learner knows and can do at a particular stage of language development (e.g., 'a student at PL1' or 'a student whose listening performance is at PL1').

PLDs maintain consistency with the K-12 Performance Definitions of the 2012 edition of the WIDA ELD Standards. As such, the PLDs continue to be written according to the three dimensions of language use: discourse, sentence, and word/phrase.

## The Dimensions of Language Use

The dimensions of language use are one way to conceptualize the linguistic system within a sociocultural context. Language users make choices in all three dimensions of language that contribute to how a text is purposely constructed to have the desired effect on its intended audience(s).



### The relationship between Language Expectations and Proficiency Level Descriptors

**Language Expectations** offer goals for how all students might use language to meet academic content standards.

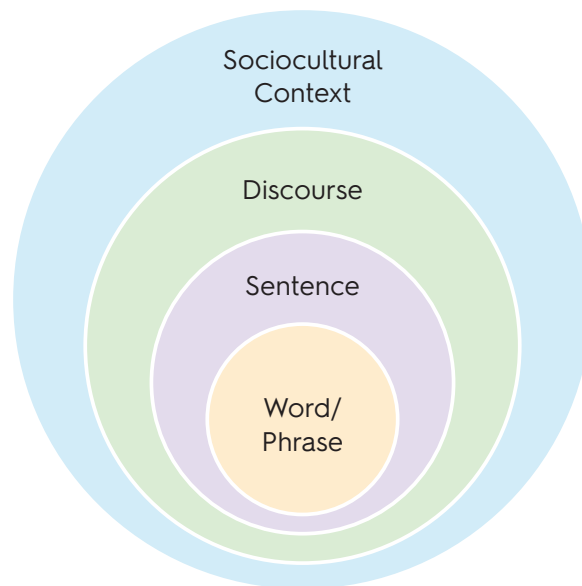
**Proficiency Level Descriptors** describe how multilingual learners might develop language across levels of English language proficiency as they move toward meeting Language Expectations.

The **discourse dimension** imparts overall meaning across an entire text, supported by the sentence and word/phrase dimensions. To consider how a language user constructs a meaningful message, begin by looking at the discourse dimension and the overarching message to see how language is organized to communicate particular ideas, how language holds ideas together in a text (its cohesion), and how loosely or tightly language is packed (its density).

The **sentence dimension** contributes to the grammatical complexity of a text. Language users make choices in how they express ideas and their interrelationships through clauses in various sentences types. These also help shape how a text is sequenced and connected.

The **word/phrase dimension** adds precision to communication. For example, language users strategically select everyday, cross-disciplinary, or technical language; employ multiple meanings and nuances of words and phrases; or play with their shades of meaning.

### Dimensions of Language within a Sociocultural Context



**Everyday language:** language for representing ideas in nontechnical ways (e.g., dogs instead of canines)

**Cross-disciplinary language:** common academic language used across content area contexts (e.g., analyze, evaluate, summarize)

**Technical language:** specialized language associated with a content area such as science and history (e.g., mitosis, imperialism)

The table on the next page updates the Features of Academic Language table (WIDA, 2014). It delineates five criteria across the three dimensions of language, framed within a sociocultural context. In addition to the dimensions and their criteria, the column to the far right presents sample features found in the PLDs.

**Dimensions of Language in the Proficiency Level Descriptors:  
Criteria Foci and Sample Language Features**

The three language dimensions operate within sociocultural contexts for language use.

Dimension	Criteria	Focus on . . .	Sample Language Features
Discourse	Organization of language	How ideas are coherently organized to meet a purpose through organizational patterns characteristic of the genre	Whole text organizational patterns, such as introduction, body, conclusion; claim, evidence, reasoning
	Cohesion of language	How language connects ideas within and across sentences and discourse using a range of cohesive devices	Cohesive devices, such as repeated words, synonyms, pronoun substitution, connectors
	Density of language	How information in noun groups is expanded or consolidated	Noun groups expanded with resources, such as adjectives or other modifiers added before nouns, prepositional phrases following nouns, nominalization
Sentence	Grammatical complexity of language	How relationships are expressed with clauses through simple, compound, and complex sentences	Simple, compound, complex sentences; coordinating, subordinating conjunctions; dependent and independent clauses
Word/Phrase	Precision of language	How everyday, cross-disciplinary, and technical language more effectively conveys precise meaning	A variety of words and phrases, such as adverbials of time, manner, and place; verb types; abstract nouns

## Applicable Uses of the WIDA Proficiency Level Descriptors

Below are some non-exhaustive examples of ways the PLDs may be used.

The PLDs might be used during

- Collaboration between language development and content area educators
- Professional learning activities about language development
- School team discussions about the language growth of multilingual learners
- Conversations with families in their preferred language

The PLDs might be used to

- Help design and scaffold classroom instruction and assessment tasks—as one tool among others
- Support teacher and student discussions around language performance in relation to learning goals
- Monitor progress of multilingual learners as they show language growth over time
- Evaluate evidence from student work (portfolio of speaking and writing samples) as part of the eligibility process for special services

## Inapplicable Uses of the WIDA Proficiency Level Descriptors

The PLDs should not be used as restrictive examples or as a finite list of student abilities. Nor should they be used to limit access to complex texts and grade-level materials, participation in rigorous learning, or engagement in meaningful classroom discussions. Finally, the grade-level cluster PLDs should not be used to lower expectations or slow student growth.

The Proficiency Level Descriptors should not be used as a sole source to define or categorize a multilingual learner or teacher.

PLDs should not be used as the single document or as the only evidence in high-stakes situations such as

- Identification for special education services; for example in trying to obtain cognitive support services solely based on a student's English language proficiency level
- Description of cognitive ability
- Identification of student readiness abilities
- Tracking for remediation or enrichment
- Grading in report cards
- Consideration for grade placement or retention
- Evaluation of teachers

## The WIDA ELD Standards Framework: What It is and What It is Not

The WIDA ELD Standards Framework, together with cross-disciplinary academic content standards and disciplinary practices, defines the language multilingual learners need as they move toward college, career, and civic readiness.

The WIDA ELD Standards Framework does not—indeed, cannot—enumerate all or even most of the language of school. Use of the Standards Framework must therefore be complemented by a well-developed, content-rich curriculum and effective pedagogical approaches within an equitable educational program for multilingual learners (See the full WIDA ELD Standards Framework, Section 4: Resources—Collaborative Planning for Content and Language Integration: A Jump-Off Point for Curricular Conversations).

### What the WIDA ELD Standards Framework is and What It Is Not

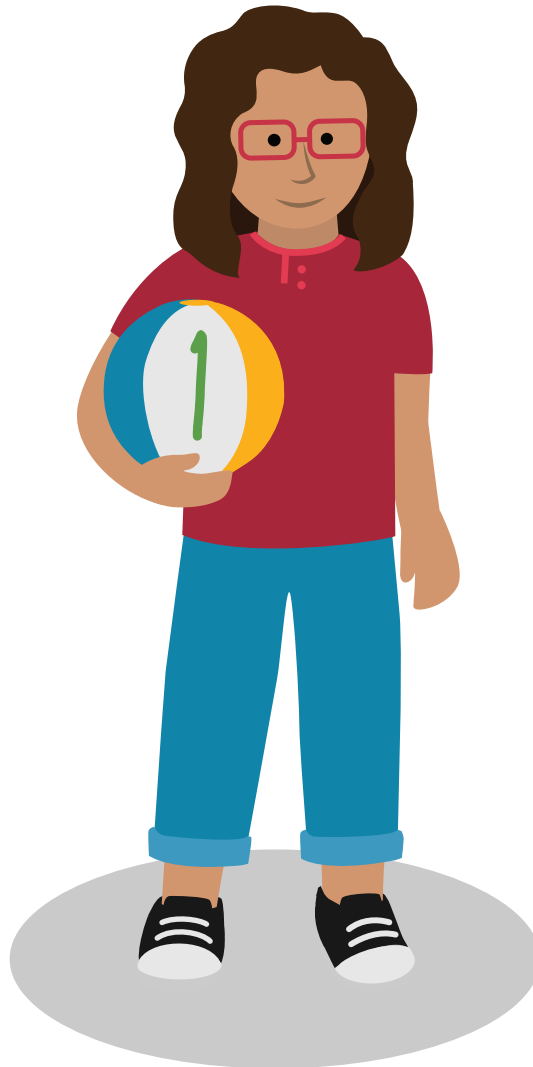
The WIDA ELD Standards Framework is	The WIDA ELD Standards Framework is NOT intended to be
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A description of clear and measurable goals for language learning represented by               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Expectations for interpretive and expressive modes of communication</li> <li>• Grade-level cluster PLDs of what multilingual learners can do at consecutive language proficiency levels</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A resource for state, district, and school accountability</li> <li>• A guide for informing the design of linguistically and culturally sustaining curriculum, instruction, and assessment</li> <li>• A central component of the comprehensive WIDA research-based system of language standards, assessment, and professional learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statements of grade-level knowledge and skills</li> <li>• A prescriptive document to be enacted without consideration for the local setting</li> <li>• A de facto curriculum or course of study</li> <li>• Specific lessons associated with units of learning with a series of language objectives</li> <li>• A step-by-step process for teaching and learning</li> <li>• An endorsement for any particular language pedagogy</li> <li>• A form of evaluation or a basis for grading</li> <li>• A compendium of academic content standards and disciplinary practices</li> <li>• Used in isolation, independent of grade-level content</li> </ul>

# Grade 1 Materials

WIDA recognizes that English language development occurs over multiple years, is variable, and depends on many factors, such as multilingual learners' ages, maturation, classroom experiences, motivation, attitudes, and types of educational programming.

With this in mind, we have developed sets of materials that are appropriate for students in different grade-level clusters (K, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12). Within each grade-level cluster section, the materials are organized according to the components of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, and include some additional resources. The grade-level cluster materials help educators enact the WIDA ELD Standards Framework.

Grade-level cluster materials rely on a deep understanding of how language works in the service of content learning. Whereas we recognize that collaboration is not possible in every situation, partnerships between language and content teachers are critically important for planning and enacting curriculum, instruction, and assessment for multilingual learners.





# GRADE **Grade 1**

# 1

Moving from kindergarten to first grade can mean big changes for children in the way they think about and interact with peers and their surroundings. In general, these young learners tend to ask and answer questions about the world, themselves, and texts in multimodal ways (for example, oral, visual, or written). Social and thinking skills develop rapidly as first graders actively explore their environment and look for answers in increasingly logical ways. Working with partners or in small groups, students feel proud to share their discoveries with others. They start to combine spoken language with some reading and writing, and make connections among ideas, illustrations, and words.

In first grade, educators and families may easily connect school to home by encouraging multilingual learners to share observations about the world in multiple languages. For example, academic learning can readily be reinforced at home simply by walking around the neighborhood to describe plant life or notice environmental print. Activities like dancing, playing games, and doing chores are also great opportunities to strengthen the home-school connection in culturally and linguistically sustaining ways. Likewise, in school, multicultural books allow students to practice academic concepts in ways that reflect the experiences of multilingual learners and their families.

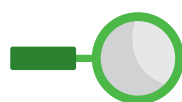
In this section you can find detailed, grade-level cluster specific information about the WIDA ELD Standards Framework. Remember that the **WIDA ELD Standards Statements** are the same from kindergarten through grade 12. Then, you will find the following materials for grade 1:

- The most prominent **Key Language Uses**
- **Language Expectations**, Language Functions, and Language Features
  - **Annotated Language Samples** illustrating WIDA ELD Standards Statements, Language Expectations, Functions, and Features in authentic grade-level texts
- **Proficiency Level Descriptors**

# Key Language Uses

Key Language Uses—Narrate, Inform, Explain, and Argue—are present across all grade levels and disciplines. The table below shows snapshots of some ways students engage in each Key Language Use throughout grade 1.

Snapshots of Key Language Uses in Grade 1	
<b>Narrate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Imagine and create new stories</li><li>• Begin to develop a sense of story structures</li><li>• Interpret narratives read aloud with predictable structures and language patterns</li></ul>
<b>Inform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe and define familiar concepts or topics</li><li>• Categorize and classify information</li><li>• Interpret and construct brief descriptions or reports on familiar, concrete entities, such as animals, objects, places, or people</li></ul>
<b>Explain</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe their observations in relation to concrete phenomena in their immediate environment</li><li>• Ask and answer questions about how things work or why things are the way they are</li><li>• Interpret and construct multimodal representations of their emerging understandings of observed relationships</li></ul>
<b>Argue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Formulate opinions</li><li>• Give reasons for their opinions</li><li>• Interpret persuasive texts</li></ul>



*Learn more about each Key Language Use across the grades and disciplines in Section 4: Resources—Key Language Uses: A Closer Look, in the complete edition of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework.*

The **most prominent Key Language Uses** in grade 1 are the **basis for its Language Expectations**. They are marked with a filled-in circle (●) in the boxes of the table below. The half-filled circle and the open circle indicate lesser degrees of prominence of each Key Language Use; see the legend underneath the table.

Distribution of Key Language Uses in Grade 1				
WIDA ELD Standard	Narrate	Inform	Explain	Argue
1. Language for Social and Instructional Purposes	●	●	●	●
2. Language for Language Arts	●	●	○	◐
3. Language for Mathematics	○	●	◐	◐
4. Language for Science	○	●	●	◐
5. Language for Social Studies	◐	●	○	●

 Most Prominent  
  Prominent  
  Present

# Language Expectations, Functions, and Features

## Language Expectations

**Language Expectations** are interpretive and expressive goals for content-driven language learning. They articulate the language necessary for meeting academic content standards.

## Language Function

Language Expectations are built around a set of **Language Functions**. Language Functions highlight common patterns of language use, showcasing particular ways students might use language to meet the purposes of schooling. For example, a series of Language Functions is associated with the process of constructing fictional narratives, informing peers of newly gained knowledge, explaining phenomena, or engaging in scientific argumentation. In the figure on the next page, you can see that the Language Functions are listed in bulleted form, under the interpretive and expressive language expectations.

## Standard 1 Language Expectations and Language Functions

Given its broad scope and applicability, Language Expectations and Language Functions for **Standard 1** (Language for Social and Instructional Purposes) are presented in two wide-ranging spans, the first for grades K-3 and the second for grades 4-12. These are logical divisions between early childhood education and upper elementary years and beyond. Language Expectations and Functions for **Standard 1** can be readily interwoven or paired with those in **Standards 2-5** (Language for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies). The pairing of Standard 1 with Standards 2-5 reminds us that students communicate as part of disciplinary learning, but also to convey personal needs and wants, to affirm their own identities, and to form and maintain relationships.

## Language Features

The Language Functions of Standards 2-5 are further delineated with **Language Features**. In the figure on the next page, you can see sample Language Features for each Language Function, marked with a box (■). Language Features are examples of various language resources that carry out particular Language Functions, such as different types of sentences, clauses, phrases, and words. Due to the intertwining nature of Standard 1 with Standards 2-5, there are no specific Language Features for Standard 1.

In the example here, you can see how the Language Features connect to the Language Functions in the expressive Language Expectations. Language Features are only shown in the expressive functions because those also help us see how learners have processed information through interpretive modes. For example, when multilingual learners share information about something they have heard, read, or viewed, we can use their expressive language skills to evaluate and guide our instructional choices.

The figure on the next page shows how the Language Functions and Language Features appear.

## Grade 1 Language Functions and Language Features

GRADE  
**1**

### WIDA ELD STANDARD 2 Language for Language Arts

Inform

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

#### ELD-LA.1.Inform.Interpretive

Interpret informational texts in language arts by

- Identifying main topic and/or entity and key details
- Asking and answering questions about descriptions of attributes and characteristics
- Identifying word choices in relation to topic or content area

#### ELD-LA.1.Inform.Expressive

Construct informational texts in language arts that

- Introduce and define topic and/or entity for audience
- Describe attributes and characteristics with facts, definitions, and relevant details

Language Functions (common patterns of language use) appear here and again below

#### Language Functions and Sample Language Features

##### Introduce and define topic and/or entity for audience through...

- Title, generalized nouns to introduce topic (*The Desert, Lizards*)
- Relating verbs (*have, be, belong to*) to define the topic (*Lizards are reptiles.*) or state of entity (*The river is long.*)
- Pronouns (*it, they*), demonstratives (*this, these, that, those*), renaming (*lizard=it*) to reference topic across text

##### Describe attributes and characteristics with facts, definitions, and relevant details through...

- Noun groups to add description and precision that answer questions about what something is like, or its color, shape, or size (*red and yellow feathers*)
- Prepositional phrases to describe place or location (*on the ground, in Antarctica*)
- Compound sentences to add details (*Birds like fruit and seeds. The river is long and deep.*)
- Doing verbs to describe actions (*eats, lives*)
- Visuals (labeled drawings) to support information

Language Features (examples of language resources) appear here

GRADE

1

# WIDA ELD STANDARD 1

## Social and Instructional Language

The Language Expectations and Language Functions of Standard 1 are interwoven and paired with those of Standards 2-5. For this reason, remember that there are no specific Language Features for Standard 1, and that the expectations for the interpretive and expressive communication modes are the same. As you can see from the reference codes, the Language Expectations are the same for students in kindergarten through grade 3.

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

### Narrate

#### ELD-SI.K-3.Narrate

- Share ideas about one's own and others' lived experiences and previous learning
- Connect stories with images and representations to add meaning
- Ask questions about what others have shared
- Recount and restate ideas
- Discuss how stories might end or next steps

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

### Inform

#### ELD-SI.K-3.Inform

- Define and classify objects or concepts
- Describe characteristics, patterns, or behavior
- Describe parts and wholes
- Sort, clarify, and summarize ideas
- Summarize information from interaction with others and from learning experiences

GRADE

1

# WIDA ELD STANDARD 1

## Social and Instructional Language

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

### Explain

#### ELD-SI.K-3.Explain

- Share initial thinking with others
- Follow and describe cycles in diagrams, steps in procedures, or causes and effects
- Compare and contrast objects or concepts
- Offer ideas and suggestions
- Act on feedback to revise understandings of how or why something works

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

### Argue

#### ELD-SI.K-3.Argue

- Ask questions about others' opinions
- Support own opinions with reasons
- Clarify and elaborate ideas based on feedback
- Defend change in one's own thinking
- Revise one's own opinions based on new information

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

**ELD-LA.1.Narrate.Interpretive**

Interpret language arts narratives by

- Identifying a central message from key details
- Identifying how character attributes and actions contribute to an event
- Identifying words and phrases that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses

**ELD-LA.1.Narrate.Expressive**

Construct language arts narratives that

- Orient audience to story
- Develop story events
- Engage and adjust for audience

## Language Functions and Sample Language Features

### Orient audience to story through...

- Pictures, words, title, statements or common story expressions (*Once upon a time*) to introduce context
- Noun groups to state who or what the story is about (*the white swans, Joey's big family*)
- Simple statements to introduce the problem (*They got lost.*)
- Prepositional phrases to specify location and time (*by the river, in the barn, during the summer, last year, every night*)

### Develop story events through...

- Verbs to describe what characters do, think, feel, and say
- Connectors to sequence time (*first, next, and then*), and events (*before, after, later*), and to combine and link event details (*and, but, so*)
- Pronouns, renaming, and synonyms to reference a character or idea across the text (*my neighbor=Bob, the tree fort=my special place*)
- Simple statement to provide closure (*The End, And then we went home.*)

### Engage and adjust for audience through...

- Pictures and other graphics to complement the storyline
- Word choices to convey attitudes, develop suspense, share excitement (*my best friend, really scary, wonderful!*)
- Literary and familiar expressions (*big, ugly monster; run, run as fast as you can!*), sensory language (*yucky*) onomatopoeia (*BOOM! CRASH!*) to add interest; tone of voice and gesturing to tell a story



**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

**ELD-LA.1.Inform.Interpretive**

Interpret informational texts in language arts by

- Identifying main topic and/or entity and key details
- Asking and answering questions about descriptions of attributes and characteristics
- Identifying word choices in relation to topic or content area

**ELD-LA.1.Inform.Expressive**

Construct informational texts in language arts that

- Introduce and define topic and/or entity for audience
- Describe attributes and characteristics with facts, definitions, and relevant details

**Language Functions and Sample Language Features**

**Introduce and define topic and/or entity for audience through...**

- Title, generalized nouns to introduce topic (*The Desert, Lizards*)
- Relating verbs (*have, be, belong to*) to define the topic (*Lizards are reptiles.*) or state of entity (*The river is long.*)
- Pronouns (*it, they*), demonstratives (*this, these, that, those*), renaming (*lizard=it*) to reference topic across text

**Describe attributes and characteristics with facts, definitions, and relevant details through...**

- Noun groups to add description and precision that answer questions about what something is like, or its color, shape, or size (*red and yellow feathers*)
- Prepositional phrases to describe place or location (*on the ground, in Antarctica*)
- Compound sentences to add details (*Birds like fruit and seeds. The river is long and deep.*)
- Doing verbs to describe actions (*eats, lives*)
- Visuals (labeled drawings) to support information

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

**ELD-MA.1.Inform.Interpretive**

Interpret mathematical informational texts by

- Identifying concept or entity
- Describing attributes and characteristics

**ELD-MA.1.Inform.Expressive**

Construct mathematical informational texts that

- Define or classify concept or entity
- Describe a concept or entity
- Compare/contrast concepts or entities

## Language Functions and Sample Language Features

### Define or classify concept or entity through...

- Generalized nouns to identify class of things (*shapes, patterns, properties*)
- Relating verbs (*be, have*) to define, describe, or classify (*Rectangles have four sides. This is a closed shape.*)

### Describe a concept or entity through...

- Expanded noun groups to add specificity (*this has three equal sides*)
- Technical word choices to add precision and detail (*flat or solid shapes*)
- Common phrasal verbs (*part of, put together*) to describe concepts (*These two halves are part of the whole triangle.*)
- Conditional clauses (*if/then*) to demonstrate relationships (*If I put these shapes together then I can make a rectangle.*)

### Compare/contrast concepts or entities through...

- Compare/contrast signals (*both, same, different, but*) to differentiate attributes of objects (*They are both solids but this one is a triangle and this one is a cube.*)
- Causal connectors (*because, so*) to link ideas and provide reasoning (*These two shapes are the same kind because they both have four sides.*)

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

**ELD-SC.1.Inform.Interpretive**

Interpret scientific informational texts by

- Determining what text is about
- Defining or classifying concept or entity

**ELD-SC.1.Inform.Expressive**

Construct scientific informational texts that

- Introduce others to topic or entity
- Define, describe, and classify concept, topic, or entity
- Summarize observations or factual information

**Language Functions and Sample Language Features**

**Introduce others to the topic or entity through...**

- Generalized nouns to introduce topic or idea (*Whales, Sound, Patterns*)
- Openers to address audience (*Have you ever wondered about? Did you know?*)
- Relating verbs (*belong to, have, be*) to define or present state of entity (*Whales are mammals.*)
- Pronouns (*it, they*) and demonstratives (*this, that, these, those*) to reference entity or concept across text (*Paper vibrates. It makes a sound.*)

**Define, describe, and classify concept, topic, or entity through...**

- Noun groups to add details that answer questions about what something is like, its qualities, and descriptions (*floating objects, long, brown fur*)
- Visuals (labeled drawings, graphs, tables) to support information
- Timeless present verbs to indicate generalizable nature of action (*floats, sinks, eats, swims, turns*)
- Qualifiers (*some, all, many*) to describe observation or fact (*some things float, all sound is vibration, many dolphins hunt together*)
- Sequence words (*first, and, then, next, last*) to clarify order or sequence of events (*First whales swim to cold water, then...*)

**Summarize observations or factual information through...**

- Compare/contrast signals (*-er, -est, bigger than, more, both, but, different*) to differentiate or summarize attributes, details or behaviors (*Feathers float better than paper.*)
- Declarative statements to present conclusions (*Some objects float and some sink.*)
- Speculation to hypothesize to additional contexts (*I think, I wonder if...*)

# GRADE 1

## WIDA ELD STANDARD 4 Language for Science

### Explain

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

#### ELD-SC.1.Explain.Interpretive

Interpret scientific explanations by

- Defining investigable questions or simple design problems based on observations and data about a phenomenon
- Analyzing several events and observations to help explain how or why a phenomenon occurs
- Identifying information from observations (that supports particular points in explanations)

#### ELD-SC.1.Explain.Expressive

Construct scientific explanations that

- Describe observations and/or data about a phenomenon
- Relate how a series of events causes something to happen
- Compare multiple solutions to a problem

### Language Functions and Sample Language Features

#### Describe observations and/or data about a phenomenon through...

- Openers to engage audience (*Did you know how frogs change?*)
- Abstract and technical terms to add precision (*tadpole, adapt, life cycle*)
- Pictures, diagrams, graphs to add information or illustrate content
- Cohesion to reference ideas, people across text (pronouns, renaming subject, demonstratives such as *this, that*)

#### Relate how a series of events causes something to happen through...

- Timeless verbs to state on-going facts about phenomenon (*Tadpoles change into frogs*)
- Prepositional phrases to provide details (*where, when, how; Tadpoles live in the water.*)
- Relating verbs (*have, be, belong to*) and conjunctions to state relationships or compare attributes (*Tadpoles have gills but frogs have lungs.*)
- Connectors to express sequences in time (*first, next, last*)

#### Compare multiple solutions to a problem through...

- Visual data displays (charts, graphs) to support explanations
- Declarative statements to present conclusions (*Living things grow and change.*)
- Speculation to hypothesize to additional contexts (*I think, I wonder if...*)

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

**ELD-SS.1.Inform.Interpretive**

Interpret informational texts in social studies by

- Determining topic associated with compelling or supporting questions
- Defining and classifying attributes, characteristics, and qualities in relevant information

**ELD-SS.1.Inform.Expressive**

Construct informational texts in social studies that

- Introduce topic associated with compelling or supporting questions
- Provide details about disciplinary ideas

**Language Functions and Sample Language Features**

**Introduce topic associated with compelling or supporting questions through...**

- Generalized nouns to introduce topic (*weather, maps, environment*)
- Pronouns (*it, they*), demonstratives (*this, these, that, those*), to reference topic or ideas across text
- Relating verbs (*have, be, belong*) to define topic or type of information (*There are seven continents.*)
- Verbs (*are going to, will,*) to link compelling questions with topic (*We're going to learn about what people do in different places.*)

**Provide details about disciplinary ideas through...**

- Noun groups to describe and add precision to answer questions about what something is like, its quantity, qualities (*hot places, many countries, lots of rain*)
- Prepositional phrases to describe place or location (*below the Equator, on the corner, underground, in the desert*)
- Adverbials to specify periods of time, duration, specific points in time (*last year, long ago, August 12, in the future, everyday*)
- Visuals, labeled drawings to support ideas and information
- Compound sentences to add details (*Rice grows in hot and wet places.*)

**Language Expectations:** Multilingual learners will...

**ELD-SS.1.Argue.Interpretive**

Interpret social studies arguments by

- Identifying topic
- Analyzing evidence gathered from source
- Evaluating source based on distinctions between fact and opinion

**ELD-SS.1.Argue.Expressive**

Construct social studies arguments that

- Introduce topic
- Select relevant information to support claim with evidence
- Show relationship between claim, evidence and reasoning

## Language Functions and Sample Language Features

### Introduce topic through...

- Title, generalized nouns to introduce topic (*Fresh fruit for lunch*)
- Declarative statements to identify position (*School lunch should have fresh fruit.*) and/or provide background information (*Fruit is good for children to eat.*)
- Pronouns (*it, they, we, our*), demonstratives (*these, this, that, those*), and renaming subject (*food=it; students=we=children*) to reference topic across text

### Select relevant information to support claim with evidence through...

- Relating verbs (*have, be*) to identify topic (*Fruit is part of the food pyramid. Children need fruit every day.*)
- Prepositional phrases to identify time and place (*every day, at lunch, in school*)
- Visuals (labeled drawings) to support purpose
- Expanded noun phrases to add details (*fresh fruit, healthy food*)

### Show relationship between claim and evidence, and reasoning through...


- Connectors (*because, so, and*) to link claims with evidence and reasoning (*We should eat fruit every day because it has vitamins to help us grow.*)

# Annotated Language Samples

Annotated Language Samples exemplify the WIDA ELD Standards Framework in action. In particular, they show an ELD Standards Statement, a Key Language Use, a Language Expectation, as well as its Language Functions and Language Features contextualized in authentic grade-level texts. The samples, drawn from the work of teachers and students from across the WIDA Consortium, help make more visible the language for content learning. In this way, educators can envision how to highlight language and plan for its systematic development during content learning.

## LEGEND FOR THE ANNOTATED TEXTS

Several different conventions are used to indicate example Language Features in the annotated text:

- **Language Functions (bold white text on a green background)**
- **Connectors, sequence words (in bold)**
- Nouns and noun groups (in red with dashed underline)
- Verbs and verb groups (in green with dotted underline)
- Prepositional and adverbial phrases (in blue with diamond underline)
- *Objective/evaluative language (words or phrases) (in italics)*
- Cohesive devices (circles and arrows within the text) 
- Sentences (underlined and italics)
- Sentences (highlighted with boxes around them)

Note: Examples of sentences are declarative statements, statements of claims, statements foreshadowing events. See individual texts for more detail.

Annotated Language Sample

**Context:** This text was written by a first-grader as part of a lesson on how to write procedural texts. This student chose to write about making an edible spider out of Rice Krispie treats (cereal with marshmallows). The teacher guided the students to sequence the steps in the procedure using connectors (e.g., first, next, then, lastly).

**Prompt:** Write a paragraph that tells someone how to make something.

Language Expectation: ELD-LA.1.Inform.Expressive

Multilingual learners use language to construct informational texts in language arts that

- Introduce and define topic and/or entity for audience
- Describe attributes and characteristics with facts, definitions, and relevant details

Functions & Features	How to Make a Spider Treat	Functions & Features
<p data-bbox="199 1024 451 1163"><b>Introduce and define topic and/or entity for audience through...</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 1188 253 1215">Title</p> <p data-bbox="199 1262 451 1465"><b>Describe attributes and characteristics with facts, definitions and relevant details through...</b></p> <p data-bbox="199 1493 402 1556">Doing verbs to describe actions</p> <ul data-bbox="199 1570 418 1787" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>sceesd</u> [<u>squeezed</u>]</li> <li>• <u>to mack</u> [<u>make</u>]</li> <li>• <u>use</u></li> <li>• <u>pushd</u> [<u>pushed</u>]</li> <li>• <u>put</u></li> </ul>	<p data-bbox="524 1024 1092 1098">First, I <u>sceesd</u> [<u>squeezed</u>] a <u>Rice krispy treat</u> <u>to</u> <u>mack</u> [<u>make</u>] the body.</p> <p data-bbox="524 1129 1092 1203">Next, I <u>use</u> <u>8 pretzels</u> for the legs and 2 <u>for the fangs</u>.</p> <p data-bbox="524 1234 1092 1308">Then, I <u>pushd</u> [<u>pushed</u>] <u>2 penusts</u> [<u>peanuts</u>] <u>in thet back</u> as <u>the spinnert</u> [<u>spinneret</u>]</p> <p data-bbox="524 1339 1092 1371">lastly, I <u>put</u> <u>3 raisins</u> <u>for the eyes</u>.</p>	<p data-bbox="1166 1024 1417 1228"><b>Describe attributes and characteristics with facts, definitions and relevant details through...</b></p> <p data-bbox="1166 1262 1409 1360">Noun groups to add description and precision</p> <ul data-bbox="1166 1371 1425 1591" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Rice krispy treat</u></li> <li>• <u>8 pretzels</u></li> <li>• <u>2 penusts</u> [<u>peanuts</u>]</li> <li>• <u>the spinnert</u> [<u>spinneret</u>]</li> <li>• <u>3 raisins</u></li> </ul> <p data-bbox="1166 1619 1417 1650">Prepositional phrases</p> <ul data-bbox="1166 1661 1344 1766" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>for the fangs</u></li> <li>• <u>in thet back</u></li> <li>• <u>for the eyes</u></li> </ul>



Annotated Language Sample

**Context:** This text was written by first grade teacher modeling the writing of sequential explanations about observed phenomena. Together, the class deconstructed the text, examined its language and stages, and then jointly constructed a similar text about the life cycle of a butterfly.

Language Expectation ELD-SC.1.Explain.Expressive

Multilingual learners use language to construct scientific explanations that

- Describe observations and/or data about a phenomenon
- Relate how a series of events causes something to happen
- Compare multiple solutions to a problem

Functions & Features	The Life Cycle of a Frog	Functions & Features
<p><b>Describe observations and/or data about a phenomenon through...</b></p> <p>Cohesion to reference ideas across a text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a tadpole ... it (pronoun referencing)</li> <li>• the tadpole ... it (pronoun referencing)</li> </ul> <p>Abstract and technical terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>the life cycle of a frog</u></li> <li>• <u>stages</u></li> <li>• <u>tadpole</u></li> <li>• <u>froglet</u></li> <li>• <u>adult frogs</u></li> <li>• <u>the life cycle</u></li> </ul>	<p><u>The life cycle of a frog</u> <u>has</u> several <u>stages</u>.</p> <p>First, <u>a tadpole</u> <u>hatches out of an egg</u>. <u>It</u> looks like a little fish.</p> <p>Next, <u>the tadpole</u> <u>grows</u> two back legs and its tail gets smaller. <u>It</u> is now called <u>a "froglet"</u>.</p> <p>Then, it grows two front legs and the tail gets even smaller.</p> <p>Finally, it <u>is</u> a full-grown adult frog with four legs and no tail.</p> <p><u>Adult frogs</u> can lay more eggs and <u>the life cycle</u> starts again.</p>	<p><b>Relate how a series of events causes something to happen through...</b></p> <p>Relating verbs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>has</u>.</li> <li>• <u>is</u>.</li> </ul> <p>Timeless verbs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>hatches</u></li> <li>• <u>grows</u></li> </ul> <p>Prepositional phrases to provide details about where or when</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>out of an egg</u></li> </ul> <p>Connectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>first</b></li> <li>• <b>next</b></li> <li>• <b>then</b></li> <li>• <b>finally</b></li> </ul>

### Annotated Language Sample

**Context:** This text comes from a first grade interdisciplinary unit. It was jointly written by a first grader and his teacher, who scribed for him. The student dictated the words and the teacher wrote them down. The teacher had been reading aloud informational texts on animals. The teacher had pointed out that in the texts, the authors write about what animals eat, their habitat, and where they live. Then each student chose an animal and made their own information booklet.

**Prompt:** Write an information report on an animal: tell your reader what type of animal it is, what it eats, and describe its habitat.

**Language Expectation: ELD-SS.1.Inform.Expressive**

Multilingual learners use language to construct informational texts in social studies that

- Introduce topic associated with compelling or supporting questions
- Provide details about disciplinary ideas

Functions & Features	Pandas	Functions & Features
<p><b>Introduce topic associated with compelling or supporting questions through...</b></p> <p>Generalized nouns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>pandas</u></li> <li>• <u>habitat</u></li> <li>• <u>a panda</u></li> </ul> <p>Relating verbs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>are</u></li> <li>• <u>should have</u></li> </ul>	<p><u>Pandas</u> eat bamboo to stay alive.</p> <p><u>Pandas</u> need <u>a habitat</u> to have food.</p> <p><u>Pandas are a type of animal.</u></p> <p><u>Pandas are a type of bear.</u></p> <p><u>A panda should have a type of habitat or a home.</u></p> <p><u>A panda</u> lives <u>in China</u>.</p> <p><u>Pandas</u> also have to drink <u>fresh water</u>.</p>	<p><b>Provide details about disciplinary ideas through...</b></p> <p>Noun groups to describe and add precision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>a type of animal</u></li> <li>• <u>a type of bear</u></li> <li>• <u>a type of habitat or a home</u></li> <li>• <u>fresh water</u></li> </ul> <p>Prepositional phrases to describe place or location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>in China</u></li> </ul>

# Proficiency Level Descriptors

## Remember...

**Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs)** illustrate a continuum of language development for multilingual learners across six levels of English language proficiency for each grade-level cluster. The descriptors span three dimensions of language: discourse, sentence, and word/phrase.

- Each proficiency level (PL) includes and builds on previous levels (e.g., PL4 = PL1 + PL2 + PL3 + PL4). PL6 is open-ended. It indicates that for all of us, language development continues throughout life.
- Language development is not a straightforward linear process across proficiency levels; it is contingent on a variety of factors. Multilingual learners may take various paths to develop language.
- The PLDs are designed to be used in coordination with Language Expectations, Language Functions, and Language Features.
  - Whereas Language Expectations offer goals for how *all students* might use language to meet academic content standards, PLDs offer a succinct description of how multilingual learners might develop language *across levels of language proficiency* in moving toward meeting Language Expectations.
- In the PLDs, *text* is multimodal, including oral, visual, and written forms.
- Scaffolding learning increases accessibility for multilingual learners, supports and bolsters their opportunities to meaningfully engage in grade-level content learning, and builds toward independence. The PLDs are predicated on the idea that appropriate scaffolding supports students in moving through the language proficiency levels.

# Grade 1 WIDA Proficiency Level Descriptors for the Interpretive Communication Mode (Listening, Reading, and Viewing)

Toward the end of each proficiency level, when scaffolded appropriately, multilingual learners will...

Criteria	End of Level 1	End of Level 2	End of Level 3	End of Level 4	End of Level 5	Level 6
<b>DISCOURSE</b> Organization of language	around topics ( <i>all about pandas</i> ) with repetition, rhyming, and common language patterns	around topics ( <i>all about pandas</i> ) with short sentences	around topics (habitat, diet, behavior) through multiple related simple sentences	to meet a purpose in a series of extended sentences	to meet a purpose in a short text (to inform, narrate, entertain)	to meet a purpose through generic (not genre-specific) organizational patterns in texts (beginning, middle, end)
	<b>Understand how coherent texts (spoken, written, multimodal) are created...</b>					
<b>DISCOURSE</b> Cohesion of language	patterned language with repetitive words, phrases, and sentences	repetitive chunks of meaning across a text ( <i>Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?</i> )	some frequently used cohesive devices (demonstratives: <i>these, those, that, this</i> )	a few different types of cohesive devices (repetition, pronoun referencing, etc.)	multiple types of cohesive devices (synonyms, antonyms, <i>(We are all alike. We are all different.)</i> )	a variety of cohesive devices that connect larger meaningful chunks of text (class/subclass: <i>animals like dogs, cats, tigers</i> )
	<b>Understand how ideas are connected across a whole text through...</b>					
<b>DISCOURSE</b> Density of language	frequently used single word noun groups ( <i>dinosaurs</i> )	frequently used multi-word noun groups ( <i>big tall dinosaurs</i> )	multi-word noun groups with connectors ( <i>a big and hungry dinosaur</i> )	expanded noun groups with classifiers ( <i>the biggest meat-eating dinosaurs</i> )	expanded noun groups with prepositional phrases ( <i>the meat-eating dinosaurs in the jungle</i> )	expanded noun groups with embedded clauses ( <i>the biggest meat-eating dinosaurs, who lived at that time</i> )
	<b>Understand how meanings are extended or enhanced through...</b>					
<b>SENTENCE</b> Grammatical complexity	words, pictures, phrases, and chunks of language ( <i>turtle eggs</i> )	chunks of language ( <i>turtles swimming</i> )	simple sentences ( <i>Turtles swim in the ocean.</i> )	related simple sentences ( <i>Turtles are reptiles. They like warm water.</i> )	multiple related simple sentences ( <i>There are many types of turtles. Some live in the ocean. Other turtles live in lakes and rivers.</i> )	simple and compound sentences with familiar ways of combining clauses (using coordinating conjunctions: <i>Some turtles eat only sea grasses, but others eat shrimp, crabs, and small fish.</i> )
	<b>Understand how precise meanings are created through everyday, cross-disciplinary, and technical language through...</b>					
<b>WORD, PHRASE</b> Precision of language	repeated words and phrases in familiar contexts and topics ( <i>classroom helpers</i> )	frequently used words and phrases in familiar contexts and topics ( <i>Would you like to share...?</i> )	situation-specific words and phrases ( <i>Plant the seeds in this pot</i> )	an increasing number of words and phrases ( <i>Tell me about your picture on the left.</i> )	a growing number of words and phrases in a variety of contexts ( <i>How many red triangles are there?</i> )	an expanding number of words and phrases, including idioms and collocations ( <i>plus and minus</i> )

**Grade 1 WIDA Proficiency Level Descriptors for the Expressive Communication Mode (Speaking, Writing, and Representing)**  
*Toward the end of each proficiency level, when scaffolded appropriately, multilingual learners will...*

Criteria	End of Level 1	End of Level 2	End of Level 3	End of Level 4	End of Level 5	Level 6
<b>DISCOURSE</b> Organization of language	Create coherent texts (spoken, written, multimodal) using...					
	single words, phrases, or chunks of language to represent ideas	phrases or short sentences to represent ideas with an intended purpose (to describe, narrate, share opinion)	short sentences linked together to convey an intended purpose	sentences that convey an intended purpose with an emerging organizational pattern ( <i>one day, first, last, I think, etc.</i> )	short texts that convey an intended purpose using basic connectors ( <i>first, and then, next</i> )	text that conveys an intended purpose (retelling an experience) using generic (beginning, middle, end or sequencing) organizational patterns
<b>DISCOURSE</b> Cohesion of language	Connect ideas across a whole text through...					
	patterned language with repetitive phrases and sentences ( <i>The big, hungry bear...</i> )	few frequently used cohesive devices (repetition: <i>The tiger... The tiger...</i> )	some frequently used cohesive devices (simple pronouns: <i>it, they, she, he</i> )	some formulaic cohesive devices (pronoun referencing: <i>my ball, her brother, they gave it to us, etc.</i> )	a growing number of cohesive devices (emerging use of articles to refer to the same word, substitution/ omission: <i>that one, so did I</i> )	an expanding number of cohesive devices to connect larger bundles of meaning (Class/ subclass: <i>wild animals like lions, bears, tigers</i> )
<b>DISCOURSE</b> Density of language	Elaborate or condense ideas through...					
	limited elaboration (single words)	simple elaboration (familiar single nouns)	a few types of elaboration (adding a familiar adjective to describe a noun)	some types of elaboration (adding a newly learned adjective to a noun)	a growing number of types of elaboration (adding articles or demonstratives to a noun: <i>those big fluffy white clouds</i> )	a variety of types of elaboration (adding in a variety of adjectives)
<b>SENTENCE</b> Grammatical complexity	Extend or enhance meanings through...					
	words, pictures, phrases, and chunks of language ( <i>flowers and trees</i> )	sentence fragments ( <i>grow taller</i> )	sentence fragments and emerging use of simple sentences ( <i>had no water so died</i> )	simple sentences ( <i>Plants need water. They need sun.</i> )	sentences with emerging use of clauses ( <i>Plants need water but... They need sun. Those ones died.</i> )	simple and compound sentences (with some coordinating conjunctions: <i>Our plants died and those ones did too.</i> )
<b>WORD, PHRASE</b> Precision of language	Create precise meanings through everyday, cross-disciplinary, and disciplinary language with...					
	emerging use of words and phrases with attempted precision ( <i>over there, line up in a row</i> )	few frequently used words and phrases with emerging precision ( <i>lunch time, clean up my desk</i> )	some frequently used words and phrases with some precision ( <i>have a nice day, I'm finished</i> )	a small repertoire of words and phrases with developing precision ( <i>best friend, the red ball</i> )	a growing repertoire of words and phrases with growing precision ( <i>preschool friends, math time, after lunch</i> )	an expanding repertoire of words and phrases including idioms and collocations, with expanding precision ( <i>do homework, saving time</i> )

## **Collaborative Planning for Content and Language Integration: A Jump-Off Point for Curricular Conversations**

The WIDA ELD Standards Framework, working in tandem with academic content standards, defines the language multilingual learners need as they engage in learning and prepare for college, career, and civic lives. The framework upholds the goal of increasing equity for multilingual learners by promoting a culturally and linguistically sustaining approach to education and by providing common and visible language expectations in relation to grade-level academic content. Attending to how students use language in learning acknowledges that all learners are language learners, and all teachers are language teachers. For multilingual students, this attention to language use is especially critical.

One of the framework's functions is to serve as a guide for informing the design of curriculum and instruction for multilingual learners. To support this important work, we offer a springboard for discussion around collaborative planning for curricular integration of content and language. This example showcases initial steps educators can take to use components of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework to promote language development in content units of learning. Please visit the complete WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition, to consult the full section supporting collaborative curricular planning.

## The Destination: Setting Unit-Level Goals

### Steps

1. Locate relevant **WIDA ELD Standards** by examining the unit's content standards



2. Identify the most prominent **Key Language Uses** by analyzing the unit's content standards, summative assessments, essential questions, and main learning events



3. Use **Language Expectations** to create unit language goals



4. Unpack the **Language Expectations, Functions, and Features** in the context of your unit

### Guiding Questions

What content (e.g., disciplinary practices, concepts, topics) are students expected to learn?



- How are students being asked to use language in the unit?
- What **Key Language Uses** best reflect how students will interact with language?



What **Language Expectations** best reflect the language focus of the unit?



What **Language Functions and Features** are essential for meeting content and language goals and the end-of-unit assessment?

### Getting There: Sequencing and Scaffolding Daily Lessons

Considering the Language Expectations, Functions, and Features, sequence and adapt lesson plans for continuous language development and active scaffolding of student learning.







Download a complete copy of the WIDA English Language Development Standards, 2020 Edition, from the WIDA website: [wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld](http://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld). Or purchase print copies from the WIDA store at [www.wceps.org/Store](http://www.wceps.org/Store).

Find opportunities, webinars and resources to better understand the framework and the 2020 Edition on this webpage: <https://wida.wisc.edu/grow/standards>.



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