

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Under Title III of the federal No Child Left Behind act, states and local education agencies must ensure that students with limited English proficiency (LEP) develop proficiency based on state expectations, and that they meet the same academic content and achievement standards set out for all students. This guide, in conjunction with the side-by-side comparison of the Texas Educational Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for English Language Arts and the Louisiana Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) for English, provides an overview of the similarities and differences between the two states' expectations and approaches to instruction for LEP students.

The TEKS include expectations by grade level for English Language Arts, Spanish Language Arts, and English as a Second Language (ESL). These three sets of expectations are essentially the same with slight modifications relative to the given context. As part of the ESL TEKS for Grades K-10, Texas has Second Language Acquisition TEKS, which include learning strategies and student expectations in the domains of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing and representing.

The Louisiana standards for English Language Arts, like the TEKS, outline student expectations by grade level. However, Louisiana addresses the English language learner somewhat differently. The Louisiana English Language Development Standards (ELDS) are specified in terms of Proficiency Level Expectations (PLEs), which identify what students are able to do at five levels of English language proficiency in the domains of language, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The ELDS are linked to the Louisiana's subject area content standards, and educators use both the GLEs and the PLEs to address the particular needs of English language learners.

Louisiana English Language Development Standards (ELDS) Domains

Listening Standard: *Students demonstrate competence in listening as a tool for learning and comprehension.*

As students who are limited English proficient move through the five levels of English listening proficiency from phonemic awareness to understanding short utterances and simple directions to understanding standard speech both in social and academic settings to understanding the main ideas and relevant details of extended discussions or presentations, these students will develop the English listening skills that will enable them to fully access the general education curriculum and achieve at the same academic levels as their native English-speaking peers.

Speaking Standard: *Students demonstrate competence in speaking for effective communication in social and academic contexts.*

As students who are limited English proficient move through the five levels of English speaking proficiency from using simple conversation to producing complex sentence structures to producing a high degree of fluency and accuracy when speaking to producing fluent and accurate language production in both social and academic situations, these students will develop English speaking skills that will enable them to fully access the general education curriculum and achieve at the same academic levels as their native English-speaking peers.

Reading Standard: *Students read, comprehend, analyze and respond to a range of materials using various strategies for different purposes.*

Students who are limited English proficient enter school with a wide range of literacy

skills and abilities in their native language. As students move through the five levels of English reading proficiency from letter recognition to simple language structures and syntax to complex narratives to comprehending the context of most text to using the same reading strategies to derive meaning from a wide range of social and academic texts, these students will develop the English reading skills that will enable them to fully access the general education curriculum and achieve at the same academic levels as their native English-speaking peers.

Writing Standard: Students write proficiently in English for various purposes and audiences.

Students who are limited English proficient are expected to perform on an academic level commensurate with their English-speaking peers. As students move through the five levels of English writing proficiency from letter formation to composing short informative passages to short reports to multi-paragraph essays to writing fluently using language structures and writing conventions, these students will develop the writing skills that will enable them to fully access the general education curriculum and achieve at the same academic levels as their native English speaking peers.

Assessment

The Texas assessments for English language learners are the Texas Observations Protocols (TOP) and the Reading Proficiency Test in English (RPTE), which together constitute the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). TOP assesses students in K-12 in four English language proficiency domains: listening, speaking, reading (K-2 only), and writing. In 2005, RPTE assessed students in Grades 3-12 in the domain of reading. English language learners in Grades 3-12 are required to take the RPTE until they have been exited from the program and are no longer LEP or they qualify for exemption under state criteria.

In Louisiana, all students whose first language is not English take the English Language Development Assessment (ELDA) in Grades K-12 until they are fluent English speakers at Proficiency Level 5. The ELDA assesses students proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension. The domain of comprehension incorporates the student's reading and listening score. In addition, students are required to take the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) for Grades 4, 8, 10, and 11. Students in Grades 3, 5-7, and 9 take the newly developed iLEAP.

Coding

In the Louisiana English Language Development Standards document, each PLE includes a benchmark that is cross-referenced to the English Language Arts standards. For example, (ELA 4) refers to standard 4 of the English Language Arts standards. Indicators that are coded, for example L1.2, further organize the benchmarks. The first part (L) indicates the ESL standard, which is for listening. The second part (1) indicates the proficiency level. The third number (2) represents the indicator. An X in the appropriate grade clusters represents the expectations for students.