English Language Proficiency Toolkit

EMPOWERING UNDERSTANDING, SUCCESS, AND MOTIVATION OF MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

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Dear Educator,

This English Language Proficiency (ELP) Toolkit is the result of my doctoral research from 2023, where I investigated effective methods for improving ELP and boosting student motivation. Drawing from my extensive experience in the field, this toolkit brings together various resources and tools aimed at fostering meaningful conversations about students' progress in learning English. The strategies included in this toolkit are designed to enhance student engagement and motivation while promoting better collaboration between teachers and students. My research highlights the value of using tailored, evidence-based methods to support language learners and build a collaborative educational environment.

One effective way to support the engagement and language development of multilingual learners (MLLs) is by discussing language proficiency and academic data with them. This ELP toolkit offers educators practical guidance, procedures, and talking points for discussing ACCESS scores and student performance. Each year, teachers receive student data to help facilitate discussions about progress. Additionally, students who show improvement in their language proficiency or achieve their ELP targets are awarded a certificate of achievement annually.

As part of my doctoral research, I also developed a dedicated website to enhance awareness of multilingualism among parents and teachers of English learners. This website serves as a comprehensive resource hub, providing valuable information, practical strategies, and insights designed to foster a supportive and inclusive environment for language learners.

Best regards,
Dr. Sugely Solano
Multilingual Learner Administrator | raisinglanguagelearners.com

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Rationale

Purpose

The purpose of each discussion is to empower students to be part of their learning process. When students understand how the ACCESS test is used, they connect the assessment to their educational journey and may be inspired to do their best possible work.

ACCESS Test

The ACCESS is a statewide accountability assessment that measures English language development and progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Test scores are reported for each language domain in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Combined scores report on literacy (listening and speaking), oral language (listening and speaking), and overall score (reading, writing, listening, and speaking).

The overall combined score accounts for 35% in reading, 35% in writing, 15% in listening, and 15% in speaking.

Conference Objective and Use of ELP

A conference with students offers a valuable opportunity to review and discuss their ELP scores. The primary focus of the conference should be to address and clarify each student's current level of English language progress. This helps students gain a clear understanding of their proficiency status and see where they stand in their language learning journey.

Guidelines for Discussing ELP Scores with

1. Conduct a brief 5-to-10-minute conference to discuss the importance of the screener and annual ACCESS test, ACCESS test results, recent scores, student interim and ultimate ELP target.

2. For students with an annual score, focus on the target areas below and encourage new students to try their best on their first annual test. For each conference…
   - Discuss why students take the ACCESS test.
   - Help them understand their individual ACCESS test results.
   - Discuss their most recent screener or ACCESS test results.
   - Help them understand their interim and their ultimate ELP goal.
   - Discuss what you as a teacher done to prepare them as a learner.
   - Use each piece of student data to communicate how important the test is so that students understand why their effort is important.

3. Questions to ask:
   - What specific strengths did you notice in your language skills during this period, and how did they contribute to your overall progress?
   - How can you leverage these strengths to further enhance your language proficiency in the upcoming weeks or months?
   - What challenges or obstacles did you encounter in improving your language skills, and how did you approach overcoming them?
   - Based on your experiences, what adjustments or new strategies do you plan to implement moving forward to address these challenges more effectively?

Begin conversation by emphasizing that the ACCESS test:

1. Determines English language progress status in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
2. Shows what you CAN DO and the language you KNOW in math, reading, social studies, and science.
3. Provides information educators use to determine class level placement, instruction needed in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and supports to help a students' growth target.

Scenario1: Student has taken the annual ACCESS test and has an ELP Target

"Today we will do the progress monitoring test in English. You know you've taken this test before and based on last year's results; it shows that you did great on _____ and the part that you struggled with the most was _____.

We've worked hard on _____ by _____, so today I think you will do a great job on that section of the test. Remember that the test will be administered in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The reading and writing test count for 70% of your score (35% each). Pay close attention to each section of the test so we see what you know and can do. Ask the student if they have any questions about the importance of the test.

Discuss the student's ELP Scores using the below guide:

Proficiency Levels

👂 **Listening:**
🔊 **Speaking:** (Discuss each domain score
📖 **Reading:** with student)
✍ **Writing:**

Overall: (Explain domain % worth)
(35% Reading + 35% Writing
+ 15% Listening + 15% Speaking)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Language Growth Plan

Plan Year: (Current year)
Years Remaining: (Years to reach goal)

Prior Score: (Prior score)
Actual Score: (Actual ELP score)
Target Score: (Current interim target)

Target Met? (Met or Not Met)
% Of Goal Met: (% of goal met)

What will we do to get there? (Review domain scores with student to set performance goals)

Listening (Prompt student to think what they can do to improve or maintain comprehension)
Speaking (Prompt student to think what they can do to improve or maintain speaking performance)
Reading (Prompt student to think what they can do to improve or maintain reading performance)

5

Writing <u>(Prompt student to think what they can do to improve or maintain writing performance)</u>

Scenario 2: Student first year taking annual ACCESS

"Today is your first time taking the ACCESS test. Based on your screener results, it shows that you did best on _____ and the part that you struggled with the most was _____. We've worked hard on _____ by _____, so today, I think you will do a great job on that section of the test. Keep in mind that the test will be administered in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The reading and writing test count for 70% of your score (35% each). Pay close attention to each section of the test so we see what you know and can do". Ask the student if they have any questions about the importance of the test.

Proficiency Levels

👂 **Listening:**
🔊 **Speaking:**   *(Discuss each domain screener score with student)*
📖 **Reading:**
✍️ **Writing:**

Overall: *(Explain domain % worth)*
(35% Reading + 35% Writing + 15% Listening + 15% Speaking)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Language Growth Plan

Plan Year:
Years Remaining: *(Explain to student that the first EL test score yields a plan year and target scores used to measure language progress)*

Prior Score:
Actual Score:
Target Score:

Target Met?
% Of Goal Met:

What will we do to get there? (Review screener scores with student to set performance goals)

Listening <u>(Prompt student to think what they can do to show comprehension skills)</u>
Speaking <u>(Prompt student to think what they can do to improve or maintain speaking performance)</u>
Reading <u>(Prompt student to think what they can do to improve or maintain reading performance)</u>
Writing <u>(Prompt student to think what they can do to improve or maintain writing performance)</u>

Key points to cover:
- Review the student's screener proficiency levels (Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing).
- Discuss the **growth target** for the student (What is the expected progress?).
- Highlight areas where the student shows improvement and areas that need further focus.
- Offer encouragement and suggest strategies for improvement before the test.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
PROGRESS CONFERENCE FORM

NAME: First Last Name   **GRADE:** 02 | Claymont Elementary   **TEST YEAR:** 2024

2024 Language Proficiency Scores

🦻 **Listening:** 3.2
🔊 **Speaking:** 2.3
📖 **Reading:** 2.9
✍ **Writing:** 1.5

Overall: 1.9
35% Reading + 35% Writing
+ 15% Listening + 15% Speaking

1 2 3 4 5 6

EL Proficiency Target Information

Plan Year: 2 of 5
2023 Target Score: 145

2024 Target Score: 192
2024 Actual Score: 241
% of Goal Met: 110%

2025 Target Score: 276

What will we do to get there?

❑ Listening: _Continue trying my best during listening test._

❑ Speaking: _I will practice speaking and record myself to review and improve._

❑ Reading: _Read more and participate more in class._

❑ Writing: _I will take my time writing during the test._

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
PROGRESS CONFERENCE FORM

NAME: **GRADE:**   **TEST YEAR:**

2024 Language Proficiency Scores

👂 **Listening:** _____
🔊 **Speaking:** _____
📖 **Reading:** _____
✍ **Writing:** _____

Overall: _____
35% Reading + 35% Writing
+ 15% Listening + 15% Speaking

1 2 3 4 5 6

EL Proficiency Target Information

Plan Year: _____
 2023 Target Score: _____

2024 Target Score: _____
2024 Actual Score: _____
% of Goal Met: _____

2025 Target Score: _____

What will we do to get there?

Listening

Speaking

Reading

Writing

How to Calculate Student Growth and Attainment

In the realm of ELP assessments, the availability of results and target benchmarks varies by state. While some states provide comprehensive reports detailing both current ELP scores and target results for students, others may not offer such specific data. In cases where state-provided information is limited, educators and school administrators can still effectively track student progress by merging prior year data with current assessment results. This can be accomplished by using Excel to input and organize the data, then calculating growth and proficiency scores based on the combined dataset.

By comparing historical performance with current results, educators can derive insights into student progress and determine whether students are meeting their growth targets. This approach ensures that schools can continue to monitor and support student development even in the absence of state-supplied benchmarks.

If your state or district provides ELP results use those results to generate ELP discussion forms and certificates of achievement. Depending on what your state reports and measures English proficiency progress you may need to adjust the information on the ELP Goal Conference Form.

Below are some steps to follow to **identify recipients of the certificate of achievement**.

1. **Gather Assessment Data:** Collect initial and most recent assessment scores for each student from standardized language proficiency tests or other relevant assessments. Identify each student's initial assessment score, which serves as the baseline for measuring growth.

3. **Collect Recent Scores:** Obtain the most recent assessment scores for each student. These scores reflect their current language proficiency level.

4. **Calculate Growth:** Compute the difference between the initial and recent assessment scores for each student. This is done by subtracting the baseline score from the recent score: Growth = Recent Score - Baseline Score.

5. **Compare Against Growth Targets:** Refer to established growth targets or benchmarks that define the expected amount of progress over the assessment period. Determine if each student's growth meets or exceeds these targets.

6. **Refer to Proficiency Benchmarks:** Check the proficiency benchmarks or standards that define what constitutes proficiency at various levels. These benchmarks are usually outlined in language proficiency frameworks or guidelines.

7. **Evaluate Proficiency Achievement:** Compare each student's most recent assessment score against the proficiency benchmarks. Determine if the student's score meets or exceeds the threshold required for proficiency.

8. **Document Results:** Record the growth calculations and proficiency evaluations for each student. Ensure that all data is accurately documented and organized for easy reference.

9. **Review and Verify:** Double-check calculations and ensure that the proficiency benchmarks are applied consistently across all assessments. Verify the accuracy of the results.

10. **Identify and Recognize:** Identify students who have demonstrated 80% growth or have achieved proficiency. Prepare to recognize and celebrate their accomplishments through awards, certificates, or other forms of acknowledgment.

How to Use Certificates of Achievement

The certificate of achievement is granted to MLLs each school year. Participants who meet their interim growth target and/or attain proficiency receive the below certificate. The **Certificate of Achievement** is a formal recognition awarded to English learners who meet growth targets or attain proficiency in their language skills. This certificate acknowledges their hard work, progress, and significant accomplishments in mastering English language competencies.

Rationale: Awarding Certificates of Achievement serves multiple important purposes:

1. **Motivation and Encouragement:** Recognizing students' accomplishments boosts their confidence and motivates them to continue striving for excellence. It reinforces the value of their hard work and dedication.

2. **Celebration of Progress:** Certificates provide a formal acknowledgment of the progress made by ELs, highlighting their growth and proficiency milestones. This recognition celebrates their linguistic and academic achievements.

3. **Engagement and Support:** Public recognition fosters a sense of pride and encourages continued engagement in learning. It also demonstrates to parents and teachers the effectiveness of the support provided and the tangible outcomes of their efforts.

Overall, the certificate acts as a powerful tool to affirm student success, encourage ongoing improvement, and celebrate the journey of English language learners in reaching their goals.

When to Award the Certificate of Achievement

The below settings offer an opportunity to publicly recognize and celebrate the achievements of ELs in front of their peers, teachers, and families, fostering a supportive and encouraging learning environment.

The certificate of achievement can be awarded during:

+ School-wide assemblies
+ End of year achievement ceremonies
+ Parent-teacher conferences
+ Graduation ceremonies
+ As a stand-alone ACCESS is over celebration

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT
2022 - 23

THE FOLLOWING AWARD IS PRESENTED TO

Student Name

For meeting their English language proficiency growth goal

WIDA

BSD ESOL Department - Dr. Michelle Kutch and Sugely Solano

Ideas to Celebrate Growth Towards Proficiency

Celebrating English Language Proficiency (ELP) growth is a vital component in motivating students and reinforcing their academic efforts. When students see their progress acknowledged and celebrated, several positive outcomes are achieved:

1. **Increases Motivation:** Recognizing students' achievements publicly provides a strong incentive for them to continue striving for excellence. The celebration of their hard work fuels their desire to keep improving and achieving new milestones.

2. **Builds Confidence:** Acknowledgment of progress helps students build self-esteem and confidence. When students are praised for their accomplishments, they gain a greater belief in their abilities, which encourages them to tackle new challenges with enthusiasm.

3. **Encourages Continued Effort:** Celebrations create a positive feedback loop. By recognizing growth, students receive affirmation that their efforts are valued and rewarded, motivating them to maintain their dedication and effort.

4. **Fosters a Positive Learning Environment:** Celebratory practices contribute to a supportive and encouraging classroom atmosphere. They help create a sense of community and collaboration among students, teachers, and families, enhancing the overall learning experience.

5. **Highlights Progress:** Focusing on students' achievements rather than solely on areas needing improvement shifts their perspective to recognize and appreciate their progress, which can inspire further learning and achievement.

Celebrate as a Class

Some teachers celebrate as a class or invite other students to a classroom party. Teachers may offer food such as pizza or snacks in these types of celebrations. An advantage to this type of celebration is that teachers can combine students from multiple grade levels and different grade levels if their teaching schedule does not allow for combination.

Others may choose to invite students for lunch in the class. This option is often used to reward positive student behavior in school. Games and activities are often part of this option, making it a fun activity. Students enjoy this option because they eat with their teacher and share a game or activity with other friends. Incorporate activities such as games, refreshments, and recognition certificates.

<p style="text-align:center">** Additional ideas to **celebrate ELP growth** with students **</p>

1. Award Ceremonies
- ❑ Host a special ceremony where students are recognized and awarded certificates or trophies for their proficiency growth.
- ❑ **Details:** Include speeches from teachers or administrators and invite parents to celebrate the students' achievements.

2. Student Showcases
- ❑ Organize a showcase where students present their language projects, improvements, or achievements.
- ❑ **Details:** Allow students to share their experiences and progress with peers, teachers, and families.

3. Public Recognition
- ❑ Feature students' achievements in school newsletters, on bulletin boards, or on the school's website.
- ❑ **Details:** Highlight progress and celebrate hard work with the wider school community.

4. Personalized Notes
- ❑ Send personalized congratulatory notes or letters to students acknowledging their hard work and growth.
- ❑ **Details:** Include specific achievement details to make the recognition more meaningful.

5. Celebratory Displays
- ❑ Create a display or "Wall of Fame" in a prominent area of the school to showcase students' progress and achievements.
- ❑ **Details:** Include photos, certificates, and descriptions of their proficiency growth.

6. Special Privileges
- ❑ Offer special privileges or rewards, such as extra recess time, homework passes, or classroom leader roles.
- ❑ **Details:** Tailor rewards to be meaningful and motivating for students.

7. Parent-Teacher Conferences
- ❑ Highlight students' growth during parent-teacher conferences to celebrate their progress with their families.
- ❑ **Details:** Provide detailed reports and discuss the students' achievements and next steps.

8. Digital Badges
- ❑ Issue digital badges or certificates that students can share on social media or display in their digital portfolios.
- ❑ **Details:** Use online platforms to create and distribute badges that recognize specific milestones and achievements.

9. Success Assemblies
- ❑ Host a school-wide assembly dedicated to celebrating the achievements of students who have shown proficiency growth.
- ❑ **Details:** Incorporate performances, speeches, and the distribution of awards to make the event memorable.

10. School Banner
- ❑ Use a school banner to celebrate and foster a positive, supportive environment.
- ❑ **Details:** Create a vibrant school banner that prominently displays the names of students who have achieved significant language growth milestones. Students can sign the banner.

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT
2024 - 25

THE FOLLOWING AWARD IS PRESENTED TO

Student Name

School

For growing XX% towards their English language proficiency growth goal

Add signatures here!

Enter School or Department – Enter Supervisor or Teacher Names

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT
2024 - 25

THE FOLLOWING AWARD IS PRESENTED TO

Student Name

School

For reaching the state of Delaware English language proficiency exit criteria in 2025

Add signatures here!
_____

Enter School or Department – Enter Supervisor or Teacher Names

About This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to provide educators with a comprehensive set of strategies and ideas for celebrating and recognizing English Language Proficiency (ELP) growth. Drawing from best practices and recent research, this guide offers various methods for motivating students and fostering a positive learning environment. By implementing these celebratory practices, educators can enhance student engagement, boost motivation, and build a supportive community around language learning achievements.

Resources:

For additional resources and ongoing support, visit our website at raisinglanguagelearners.com. Here, you will find more information on multilingualism, practical tools, and ideas to continue supporting English learners in their academic journey.

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Note:

This toolkit is intended for educational use only. Educators are encouraged to adapt and modify the strategies to best fit their unique classroom needs and resources.