

The WIDA English Language Development Standards

The WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards represent the social, instructional, and academic language that students need to engage with peers, educators, and the curriculum in schools. Figure B shows the five standards and their abbreviations.

Figure B: The English Language Development Standards

Standard		Abbreviation
English Language Development Standard 1	English language learners communicate for Social and Instructional purposes within the school setting	Social and Instructional language
English Language Development Standard 2	English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Arts	The language of Language Arts
English Language Development Standard 3	English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Mathematics	The language of Mathematics
English Language Development Standard 4	English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Science	The language of Science
English Language Development Standard 5	English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Social Studies	The language of Social Studies

Standard 1 draws on students' personal experiences as they interact with teachers and peers. It works in conjunction with Standards 2–5 that address the language of the content areas.

Grade Levels and Grade-Level Clusters

WIDA recognizes that English language development occurs over multiple years, is variable, and depends on many factors (e.g., age, maturation, classroom experiences, programming, motivation, and attitudes). With this in mind, WIDA has organized the ELD standards around individual grade levels from Kindergarten through 8th grade and for grade-level clusters 9–10 and 11–12. Having examples at the individual grade levels allows educators to recognize content topics pertaining to their grade and, most importantly, remind them that instruction for ELLs must be age and developmentally appropriate. As language development is a multi-year process, we encourage educators to look at examples of language development across a cluster of grades to get a fuller picture of the range of language development for their students. WIDA has a separate publication containing early language development standards for Pre-Kindergarteners (children ages 2.5–5.5), as language development for this age group is unique.

Developmentally Appropriate Academic Language in Sociocultural Contexts

WIDA illustrates social, instructional, and academic language as three dimensions: discourse dimension, sentence dimension, and word/phrase dimension. The **FEATURES OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGE** in Figure C delineate academic language in each of these dimensions and their corresponding criteria of