WIDA™

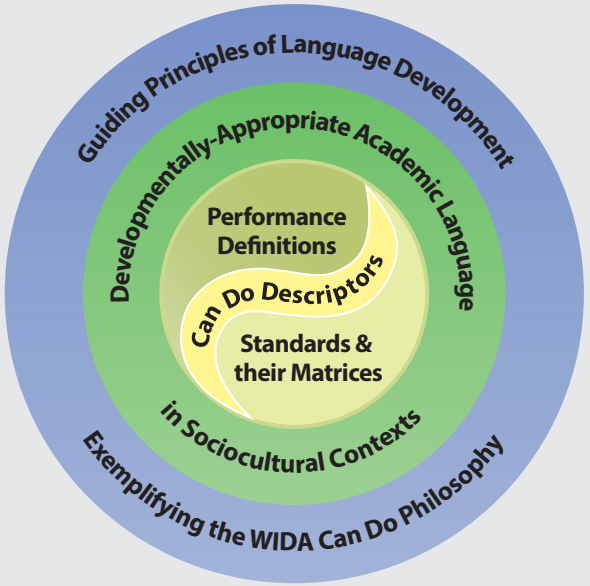
Can Do Descriptors

KEY USES EDITION

Grades 4-5

The WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grades K–12

The Can Do Descriptors provide examples of what language learners ***can do*** at various stages of English language development in listening, speaking, reading and writing. The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* are one component of the WIDA Standards Framework (shown at right). The Framework, as a whole, supports the implementation of the WIDA Language Development Standards in the instruction and assessment of language learners. We encourage educators to use the *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* in conjunction with the other components of the Framework, along with the previous edition of the Can Do Descriptors. For more information on the WIDA Standards Framework, visit www.wida.us.



English Language Development Standards Framework

The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* provide examples of academic language use for four specific communicative purposes. These purposes, referred to as **Key Uses,** were identified based on reviews of literature and a language analysis of college and career readiness standards:

Recount: To display knowledge or narrate experiences or events. Example tasks that include the Key Use of **Recount** include telling or summarizing stories, producing information reports, and sharing past experiences.

Explain: To clarify the "why" or the "how" of ideas, actions, or phenomena. Example tasks that include the Key Use of **Explain** include classroom discussions of natural phenomena, presentations of systems explanations, multimedia projects showing processes, causes and effects, and consequences of events.

Argue: To persuade by making claims supported by evidence. Example tasks that include the Key Use of **Argue** include oral presentations defending points of view, creating persuasive texts, and constructing arguments supported by evidence.

Discuss: To interact with others to build meaning and share knowledge. Example tasks that include the Key Use of **Discuss** include participating in small or large group activities and projects.

The Key Uses, as well as the example tasks, are not exhaustive, but are meant to help guide the planning and conversation around meaningful participation of language learners in standards-based content curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Organization of the WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grades K–12

The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* are organized by grade-level bands (K, 1, 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12) that correspond to those in ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. Within each grade-level band, the descriptors are organized by Key Use (Recount, Explain, Argue and Discuss) and within each Key Use, there are example descriptors across WIDA's six levels of language proficiency (ELP Levels 1–6).

The descriptors in Level 6 represent the language performance of students who have met all the criteria for Level 5. Unlike the descriptors at Levels 1–5 that provide examples of performance at the end of the level, the descriptors at Level 6 are examples of performance within the Level 6.

For three of the Key Uses (**Recount, Explain,** and **Argue**) you'll see descriptors for the four language domains (Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing). The descriptors for the Key Use **Discuss** are only shown for the domain of Oral Language. The Key Use **Discuss** highlights the importance of oral language development for the meaningful participation of all language learners at this grade level, regardless of their level of language proficiency. The descriptors in the Key Use **Discuss** provide examples of what students ***can do*** to participate in oral discussions.

Potential Uses for the Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition

Audiences	The WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition can help….
Educators who work with language learners, including coaches, teachers *(e.g., general education, gifted and talented, special education, Title I),* language specialists, and support staff.	• Interpret results from WIDA English language proficiency assessments *(e.g., ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, WIDA MODEL, and language screeners)* to inform classroom decisions • Differentiate curriculum, instruction, and assessments designed in English based on language learners' levels of English language proficiency • Collaborate and engage in instructional conversations about the academic success of language learners in English environments • Advocate for equitable access to content for language learners based on their level of language proficiency
Administrators and school leaders	• Interpret results from WIDA English language proficiency assessments *(e.g., ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, WIDA MODEL, and language screeners)* to inform decisions on educational programming for language learners • Communicate with other educators about students' English language development • Support the WIDA Can Do philosophy throughout schools and districts • Advocate for equitable access to content for language learners based on their level of language proficiency

Stakeholders are encouraged to use the Can Do Descriptors beyond the audiences and purposes identified above to advocate on behalf of language learners.

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	**Process recounts by** • Matching oral words and phrases to content-related pictures or objects • Identifying the topic in oral statements	**Process recounts by** • Classifying time-related language in oral statements *(e.g., present, past, future)* • Connecting the context of narratives *(e.g., the who, what, when, & where)* to illustrations	**Process recounts by** • Identifying the beginning, middle and end in an oral retelling of a text • Following tasks and directions retold by peers	**Process recounts by** • Sequencing events or steps based on oral reading of informational text • Recognizing the language of related genres *(e.g., news reports, historical accounts)*	**Process recounts by** • Identify related information from multiple sources presented orally • Recognizing the key historical, scientific or technical language used in a mini-lecture	**Process recounts by** • Identifying the overall structure *(e.g., chronology)* of events, ideas, concepts, or information in oral presentations • Differentiating similarities and differences of information presented through multimedia and written text
SPEAKING	**Recount by** • Stating key words and phrases associated with the content using visual or graphic support • Communicating personal experiences orally	**Recount by** • Retelling short stories or content-related events • Stating procedural steps across content areas	**Recount by** • Presenting detailed content-related information that has been rehearsed • Stating main ideas in classroom conversations on social and academic topics	**Recount by** • Giving content-related oral reports • Sequencing steps to solve a problem *(e.g., changing mixed numbers)*	**Recount by** • Conveying personal and content-related experiences within a team format • Using technical and specific vocabulary when sharing content information	**Recount by** • Summarizing discussions on content-related topics • Expanding on topics with descriptive details using varied vocabulary

**Except for level 6, for which there is no ceiling.*

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
READING	**Process recounts by** • Identifying words in context during oral reading of illustrated text on familiar topics or experiences • Highlighting previewed or familiar phrases	**Process recounts by** • Classifying time-related language in text as present or past • Identifying the "who," "what," "where," and "when" in narrative text with a partner	**Process recounts by** • Sequencing events in stories or content-related processes • Identifying main ideas in narrative and informational text	**Process recounts by** • Connecting details to main ideas or themes • Identifying conclusions in multi-paragraph text	**Process recounts by** • Becoming familiar with the language of related genres *(e.g., news reports, historical accounts)* • Summarizing information from multiple related sources	**Process recounts by** • Identifying the overall structure *(e.g., chronology)* of events, ideas, concepts, or information in text • Highlighting events or procedures that happened in historical, scientific, or technical text
WRITING	**Recount by** • Communicating personal experiences through drawings and words • Reproducing a series of events through illustrated text	**Recount by** • Listing procedural steps across content areas • Listing positive and negative effects of events in informational or narrative texts	**Recount by** • Using key words and phrases reflective of the main idea • Conveying details using concrete words and phrases	**Recount by** • Relating a sequence of events using a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses • Synthesizing information across related texts *(e.g., author study)*	**Recount by** • Producing content-related reports • Creating narratives that connect personal experiences and content	**Recount by** • Summarizing content-related information • Using narrative theme to extend the storyline

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	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	**Process explanations by** • Sequencing oral procedures or cycles with images • Distinguishing key words and phrases related to the phenomena	**Process explanations by** • Organizing routine causal or sequential relationships described orally • Following oral directions to show recurring steps in cycles or problem-solving	**Process explanations by** • Interpreting cause and effect relationships in oral conversations • Recognizing relationships in a series of oral statements	**Process explanations by** • Identifying precise details, descriptions, comparisons that support the explanation • Following oral information on how or why phenomenon occur	**Process explanations by** • Recognizing language used to enhance specificity of a phenomenon in class discussions • Identifying components of systems *(e.g., ecosystems, branches of government)* in small group interactions	**Process explanations by** • Interpreting the specific language used to enhance descriptions of a phenomenon • Attending to the language related to an event or phenomenon in peer presentations
SPEAKING	**Explain by** • Naming components of a phenomenon using illustrations, photographs, or diagrams • Demonstrating a procedure using realia	**Explain by** • Giving reasons why or how something works using diagrams, charts or images • Stating key words or phrases in process in a sequential order	**Explain by** • Stating clear, sequential procedures to peers • Comparing data or information	**Explain by** • Connecting the sequential, cyclical or causal relationships of content-related issues and concepts • Presenting detailed information in small groups	**Explain by** • Elaborating by adding precision and details to content-related sequence or causal phenomenon • Describing relationships of components within systems *(e.g., ecosystems, government)*	**Explain by** • Analyzing how variables contribute to an event or outcome • Maintaining a formal register

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	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
READING	**Process explanations by** • Matching illustrated words/ phrases to causal and sequential language • Sequencing sentences strips to show content-area processes from illustrated texts	**Process explanations by** • Identifying different types of connectors *(e.g., first, next, because, so)* • Identifying key words and phrases that describe the topic or phenomena	**Process explanations by** • Matching causes with effects • Identifying words or phrases to determine the type of explanation *(e.g., linear sequence, cycle, system)*	**Process explanations by** • Identifying the different words or phrases that are used to describe the same topic or phenomena • Organizing information on how or why phenomena occur	**Process explanations by** • Identifying how the text provides clear details of the topic or phenomena • Identifying components of systems *(e.g., ecosystems, branches of government)*	**Process explanations by** • Identifying how a text presents information in a factual or neutral manner • Evaluating the specific language used to enhance descriptions of a phenomenon
WRITING	**Explain by** • Producing short-answer responses to questions using word/ phrase banks • Labeling charts and graphs to describe phenomena *(e.g., organisms in ecosystems)*	**Explain by** • Using key terms related to the phenomena • Ordering linear and cyclical sequences of a phenomena *(e.g., The steps of how a volcano erupts)*	**Explain by** • Connecting related ideas or concepts using linking words and phrases • Answering "how" or "why questions *(e.g., "How does the water cycle work?" "Why are there three branches of government?")*	**Explain by** • Presenting information on processes or phenomena from a variety of sources • Elaborating topics with facts, definitions, concrete details, or quotations and examples	**Explain by** • Describing how factors contribute to an event or an outcome • Describing how systems relate or interact	**Explain by** • Presenting information on processes or phenomena supported by facts and details in essays and reports • Selecting the appropriate organizational structure for the process or phenomenon being described

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	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	**Process arguments by** • Matching illustrations with oral points of view • Identifying language related to facts or opinions from oral presentations	**Process arguments by** • Sorting evidence and claims from oral descriptions • Distinguishing words and phrases related to opinions or facts from oral statements	**Process arguments by** • Identifying different perspectives, stances, or points of view • Recognizing reasons for position in oral presentations	**Process arguments by** • Identifying evidence that supports predictions or hypotheses • Differentiating between multiple points of view in a class discussion	**Process arguments by** • Distinguishing certainty from uncertainty of spoken words or phrases in context • Identifying the degree of formality in an oral presentation	**Process arguments by** • Recognizing the strength of the quality of evidence presented in oral discourse • Identifying the purpose of the argument
SPEAKING	**Argues by** • Stating reasons for choices using words or phrases • Answering yes/no or choice questions across content or personal preferences	**Argues by** • Stating opinions based on experiences • Responding to opinion statements of other with personal preferences	**Argues by** • Expressing opinions using content-area specific language • Presenting content-based facts that support a position	**Argues by** • Stating relevant evidence for claims • Responding to opinion statements of other with reasons or evidence	**Argues by** • Supporting a claim with evidence from various sources • Using claims and evidences to persuade an audience	**Argues by** • Countering a different point view • Stating conclusions based on a summary of information from the various sides

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READING	**Process arguments by** • Identifying key words and phrases that make up a claim • Identifying a claim or opinion in multimedia with a partner	**Process arguments by** • Identifying language indicative of points of view • Organizing evidence based on sequential language in texts • Differentiating between claims and evidence	**Process arguments by** • Identifying evidence from multiple places within a text • Identifying different perspectives, stances, or points of view	**Process arguments by** • Hypothesizing or predicting based on evidence • Comparing multiple points of view on a topic	**Process arguments by** • Connecting personal experience with textual evidence to strengthen an interpretation of the text • Evaluating the strength of evidence as it supports a claim	**Process arguments by** • Evaluating claims and evidence by drawing multiple print sources • Differentiating the strength of different pieces of evidence as it supports a claim
WRITING	**Argues by** • Selecting words and phrases to represent points of view using facts from illustrated texts or posters • Using key words or phrases related to the topic	**Argues by** • Stating reasons for particular points of view • Listing pros and cons of issues	**Argues by** • Connecting reasons to opinions supported by facts and details • Making adjustments for audience and context	**Argues by** • Comparing and contrasting evidence for claims • Providing reasons and evidence which support particular points	**Argues by** • Evaluating positive and negative implications associated with various positions *(e.g., historical events, scientific discoveries)* • Including evidence from multiple sources	**Argues by** • Organizing ideas and information logically and coherently • Integrating information from multiple sources to provide evidence for claims

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DOMAINS: ORAL LANGUAGE	**Discuss by** • Expressing own ideas in a variety of ways *(e.g., drawing, using gestures, graphing)* • Tracking the person speaking • Sharing own work *(e.g., graphic organizers, drawings)* to contribute to the conversation	**Discuss by** • Taking turns and applying conventions specific to particular conversations • Addressing others according to relationship *(e.g., student-peers, student-teacher)*	**Discuss by** • Asking clarifying questions to demonstrate engagement • Using examples to clarify own statements • Answering questions to contribute on a topic	**Discuss by** • Elaborating on statements of others to extend ideas • Presenting creative solutions to resolve communication issues • Contributing ideas to co-create group responses	**Discuss by** • Recognizing how language can be used to express bias and influence others • Challenging ideas respectfully • Managing conversations to stay focused on a topic	**Discuss by** • Examining the value of examples to determine when to add them to bring clarity to own statements • Extend conversations by developing topics with clear examples and information

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Please visit www.wida.us to view a full list of educators who participated on the development workshop, national experts who shared their expertise in the development process, and those who participated in the review of the Can Do descriptors.

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