

ELPS-TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors Grades 2–12 Writing

Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced	Advanced High
<p>Beginning English language learners (ELLs) lack the English vocabulary and grasp of English language structures necessary to address grade-appropriate writing tasks meaningfully.</p> <p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have little or no ability to use the English language to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction • lack the English necessary to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing (e.g., focus and coherence, conventions, organization, voice, and development of ideas) in English <p>Typical writing features at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to label, list, and copy • high-frequency words/phrases and short, simple sentences (or even short paragraphs) based primarily on recently practiced, memorized, or highly familiar material; this type of writing may be quite accurate • present tense used primarily • frequent primary language features (spelling patterns, word order, literal translations, and words from the student's primary language) and other errors associated with second language acquisition may significantly hinder or prevent understanding, even for individuals accustomed to the writing of ELLs 	<p>Intermediate ELLs have enough English vocabulary and enough grasp of English language structures to address grade-appropriate writing tasks in a limited way.</p> <p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a limited ability to use the English language to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction • are limited in their ability to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing in English; communicate best when topics are highly familiar and concrete, and require simple, high-frequency English <p>Typical writing features at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple, original messages consisting of short, simple sentences; frequent inaccuracies occur when creating or taking risks beyond familiar English • high-frequency vocabulary; academic writing often has an oral tone • loosely connected text with limited use of cohesive devices or repetitive use, which may cause gaps in meaning • repetition of ideas due to lack of vocabulary and language structures • present tense used most accurately; simple future and past tenses, if attempted, are used inconsistently or with frequent inaccuracies • descriptions, explanations, and narrations lacking detail; difficulty expressing abstract ideas • primary language features and errors associated with second language acquisition may be frequent • some writing may be understood only by individuals accustomed to the writing of ELLs; parts of the writing may be hard to understand even for individuals accustomed to the writing of ELLs 	<p>Advanced ELLs have enough English vocabulary and command of English language structures to address grade-appropriate writing tasks, although second language acquisition support is needed.</p> <p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are able to use the English language, with second language acquisition support, to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction • know enough English to be able to develop or demonstrate elements of grade-appropriate writing in English, although second language acquisition support is particularly needed when topics are abstract, academically challenging, or unfamiliar <p>Typical writing features at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grasp of basic verbs, tenses, grammar features, and sentence patterns; partial grasp of more complex verbs, tenses, grammar features, and sentence patterns • emerging grade-appropriate vocabulary; academic writing has a more academic tone • use of a variety of common cohesive devices, although some redundancy may occur • narrations, explanations, and descriptions developed in some detail with emerging clarity; quality or quantity declines when abstract ideas are expressed; academic demands are high, or low-frequency vocabulary is required • occasional second language acquisition errors • communications are usually understood by individuals not accustomed to the writing of ELLs 	<p>Advanced high ELLs have acquired the English vocabulary and command of English language structures necessary to address grade-appropriate writing tasks with minimal second language acquisition support.</p> <p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are able to use the English language, with minimal second language acquisition support, to express ideas in writing and engage meaningfully in grade-appropriate writing assignments in content area instruction • know enough English to be able to develop or demonstrate, with minimal second language acquisition support, elements of grade-appropriate writing in English <p>Typical writing features at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nearly comparable to writing of native English-speaking peers in clarity and precision with regard to English vocabulary and language structures, with occasional exceptions when writing about academically complex ideas, abstract ideas, or topics requiring low-frequency vocabulary • occasional difficulty with naturalness of phrasing and expression • errors associated with second language acquisition are minor and usually limited to low-frequency words and structures; errors rarely interfere with communication