Levels of English Proficiency Based on WIDA Standards

- Think of language acquisition as filling a cone with ice cream.
- It takes more ice cream to fill the top of the cone.
- Language gets more complex in the top levels.
- Moving from Level 1 to 2 is faster and easier.
  - Less ice cream
- Moving from Level 3 to 4 is slower and harder.
  - More ice cream
Level 5: Process rich, descriptive discourse with complex sentences & broad range of sentence patterns; can use technical & abstract content-area language.

Level 4: Process connected discourse with a variety of sentences & complex grammatical structures; can understand some technical content-area language.

Level 2: Process multiple related simple sentences; produce phrases & short sentences; can use formulaic structures & understand repetitive sentence patterns in content areas.

Level 1: Produce single words, phrases & chunks of language; can process simple grammatical constructions; can understand & use general social & instructional words & expressions.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Language Domain</th>
<th>Level 1 Entering</th>
<th>Level 2 Beginning</th>
<th>Level 3 Developing</th>
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</table>
| **Listening**  | • Point to stated pictures, words, phrases  
                • Follow one-step oral directions  
                • Match oral statements to objects, figures, or illustrations | • Sort pictures, objects according to oral instructions  
                • Follow two-step oral directions  
                • Match information from oral descriptions to objects, illustrations | • Locate, select, order information from oral descriptions  
                • Follow multi-step oral directions  
                • Categorize or sequence oral information using pictures, objects | • Compare and contrast functions or relationships from oral information  
                • Analyze and apply oral information  
                • Identify cause and effect from oral discourse | • Draw conclusions or infer from oral information  
                • Construct models based on oral discourse  
                • Make connections between ideas based on oral discourse | |
| **Speaking**   | • Name objects, people, pictures  
                • Answer wh- (who, what, when) or choice questions | • Ask wh- or choice questions  
                • Describe pictures, events, objects, people  
                • Restate facts or statements | • Formulate hypotheses, make predictions  
                • Describe processes, procedures  
                • Retell stories or events | • Discuss stories, issues, concepts  
                • Give speeches, oral reports  
                • Offer creative solutions to issues, problems | • Engage in debates  
                • Explain phenomena, give examples, and justify responses  
                • Express and defend points of view | |
| **Reading**    | • Match icons and symbols to words, phrases, or environmental print  
                • Identify concepts about print and text features | • Locate and classify information  
                • Identify facts and explicit messages  
                • Select language patterns associated with facts | • Sequence pictures, events, processes  
                • Use context clues to determine meaning of words | • Interpret information or data  
                • Find details that support main ideas  
                • Identify word families, figures of speech | • Glean information from multiple sources  
                • Draw conclusions or infer from explicit and implicit text | |
| **Writing**    | • Draw in response to oral directions  
                • Label objects, pictures, diagrams  
                • Produce icons, symbols, words, to convey messages | • Make lists  
                • Produce drawings, phrases, short sentences, notes  
                • Give information requested from oral or written directions | • Produce bare-bones expository or narrative texts  
                • Compare/contrast information  
                • Describe events, people, processes, procedures | • Summarize information from graphics or notes  
                • Edit and revise writing  
                • Create original ideas or detailed responses | • Apply information to new contexts  
                • React to multiple genres and discourses  
                • Author multiple forms of writing | |

Variability of students’ cognitive development due to age, grade level spans, their diversity of educational experiences, and diagnosed learning disabilities (if applicable), are to be considered in using this information.

The CAN DO Descriptors are available by grade level cluster (PreK-K, 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) at [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us).