

OVERVIEW OF THE WIDA CAN DO DESCRIPTORS

The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors* provide an overview of language expectations for each level of English language proficiency that English learners (ELs) should be able to exhibit. These *Descriptors* are:

- Intended to be used as a guide for all teachers to provide ELs with differentiated instruction in academic content areas.
- Provide information on the language students are able to understand and produce in the classroom.
- May be used as a rubric to provide guidance when grading students according to their cognitive development and grade level.

Organization of the *Can Do Descriptors*

The *Descriptors* are organized into five different levels that represent the stages of English Language Development, and outline how English Learners process and use language at each level.

- **Entering:** Students do not produce language. They are able to respond to pictures and other visuals. They can understand and duplicate gestures and movements to show comprehension. Total Physical Response methods will work well with them. Teachers should focus their attention on listening comprehension activities and on building vocabulary.
- **Beginning:** Students can usually speak in one-or-two word phrases. They can use short language chunks that have been memorized. Students typically progress very quickly, learning to use English for social immediate needs as well as beginning to understand and use features of academic language.
- **Developing:** Students can follow multi-steps direction and answer simple content-based questions. They can process, understand, and produce general and some specific language of the content areas.
- **Expanding:** Students are challenged to increase their English skills in more contexts, and learn a greater variety of vocabulary and linguistic structures.
- **Bridging:** Students continue to learn and apply a range of high-level English language skills in a wide variety of contexts, including comprehension and the production of highly technical texts.

ELs at all proficiency levels are capable of high-level thinking and can engage in complex, cognitively demanding social and academic activities when they are provided with appropriate scaffolding to develop their linguistic abilities. All ELs must fully participate in grade-level tasks in content areas.

LINK: WIDA - Can Do Descriptors: https://www.wida.us/standards/CAN_DOs/

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