Assessing Language Proficiency during Extended School Closures

Sample Questionnaires

Council of the Great City Schools

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 76 large-city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban education and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, and media relations. The organization also provides a network for school districts sharing common problems to exchange information and to collectively address new challenges as they emerge in order to deliver the best possible education for urban youth.

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Assessing Language Proficiency during Extended School Closures: Sample Questionnaires

Prepared by:

The Council of the Great City Schools

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Introduction

Purpose and Audience

This document provides sample questionnaires across grade bands that are designed to **provisionally** identify students as English learners (ELs) during the COVID-19-related school closures, which impede the administration of face-to-face screening protocols. **Provisional** screening protocols and interview questions do not replace the formal identification process, which districts are required to administer as soon as possible once school resumes normal operations for any student who has been given a provisional status. These sample questionnaires must be considered in light of guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Education fact sheets and funding information related to COVID-19.[1]

The sample questionnaires are designed to assess particular skills to help schools understand how much support students will need in a remote learning environment in which they are not in their usual classroom routines, and thus, are not able to fully interact and learn from peers who may be more proficient in English.

Background

Despite the COVID-19-related school closures, school districts are handling enrollment of newly arriving students or students who will be starting Kindergarten in SY 2020-21. The school closure and health-related requirements of social distancing impede staff from conducting in-person screening for English proficiency as required by state educational agencies and the protocols of specific assessment instruments. Notwithstanding the impediments of face-to-face assessments, it is necessary for school districts to have a general sense of the level of a student's proficiency in English for the following groups:

- **Current students.** Enrollment of current year students who may be English learners cannot be delayed because of the restrictions around face-to-face English proficiency screening. Estimating a provisional level of English proficiency for potential ELs allows districts to immediately provide instructional resources and supports in line with health and welfare directives from the relevant governmental entities.

- **Incoming Kindergarteners.** For students who are enrolling in Kindergarten for SY 2020-21, and who may be English learners, districts need to know the level of English proficiency to inform placement and allocate necessary resources, including staff to provide the required English acquisition instructional program in SY 2020-21.

Boston Public Schools, a Council-member district, requested that the Council of the Great City Schools provide feedback on the draft guidance for provisional EL screening issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for use during school closures. The Council provided a suggested revised guidance document and independently developed a set of sample questionnaires to be used as a provisional screener for English proficiency. This document contains the sample questionnaires developed by a working group, under the direction of the Council of the Great City Schools. The questionnaires are publicly available for use under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

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[1] A school district's ELL Director and legal counsel should ensure that any provisional screening protocols are in compliance with any settlement agreements or consent decrees relating to serving English learners, if applicable.

Contributors

The Council of the Great City Schools assembled a working group of English learner program administrators from member districts and consultants with experience designing and administering English proficiency screeners to examine and provide feedback on the Massachusetts guidance for provisional screening of ELs, as requested by Boston Public Schools. The group's work resulted in a revised guidance document and an entirely new set of sample questionnaires.

We thank the practitioners and experts who collaborated on developing the set of questions and associated rubric for the provisional screener for ELs. The work was informed by English proficiency screeners and rubrics currently in use in several other states as well as the existing implementation realities.

Council-member Districts

Boston	**Eileen De Los Reyes,** Assistant Superintendent, Office of English Learners
	Faye Karp, Executive Director, Office of English Learners
	Vera Johnson, Director, Newcomers Assessment and Counseling Center
Kansas City	**Stephanie Easley,** ESOL Assessment Specialist
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Council Staff

Gabriela Uro, Director of ELL Policy and Research

David Lai, ELL Projects Manager

External Experts

Dr. Jennifer Chard, a specialist in multilingual assessment and the Project Director of the Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener in New York State, hosted at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Jennifer's work emphasizes the importance of incorporating students' home language skills and abilities into assessments and producing culturally and linguistically appropriate materials.

Dr. Tamara Alsace, former Director of Multilingual Education for Buffalo Public Schools (NY)

Terry Walter, former San Diego County Office of Education (CA)

Descriptors of Broad Levels of English Proficiency Used in Provisional Screener and Suggested Supports

The sample questionnaires developed by the Council of the Great City Schools allow staff to assess a student's receptive and productive language ability in English for ***provisional*** placement. Corresponding rubrics were developed for the sample questionnaires. Should a district choose to use a different set of questions or add supplemental questions, care must be taken to use age-appropriate questions and questions that are free from cultural bias and do not presume a student is familiar with U.S. cultural norms or experiences. In addition, the district will need to revise the corresponding rubric.

Beginner-level students range from being completely new to English to being able to understand and/or produce common words and short, simple sentences on familiar topics related to school, self, and home. They may be able to express some basic personal information and answer "yes" or "no" to simple direct questions, showing that they have understood the question and are able to respond appropriately. Beginner-level students may be able to understand and respond appropriately to simple WH-questions (e.g., who, what, where, etc.) and questions with "or." The answers may be one-word answers, phrases, or simple sentences. Beginner-level students may not understand questions with multiple clauses. They cannot answer in sentences with multiple clauses and may have limited understanding or production of English.

> **Suggested supports.** These students will need the most support and will likely have difficulty in understanding instructions for remote learning tasks in English without a lot of help. Instructions should include visual cues (modeling, video, etc.), incorporate scaffolding, and be provided in the home language where possible to get students to the point of even being able to engage with learning English.

Intermediate-level students will answer questions using phrases or complete sentences, or single words where appropriate. Simple sentences may be grammatically accurate, with correct word order. Students can name objects in their environment and describe them with appropriate adjectives. Students can compare and contrast using appropriate connecting words and can express and support an opinion. Students can understand the prompts for these types of questions and can mostly make their answers understood, though there may be grammatical inaccuracies, pronunciation errors, and/or they may struggle with vocabulary in some areas. Students may struggle with understanding and producing complex sentences such as relative clauses, reported speech, and conditionals.

> **Suggested supports.** These students will likely understand simple instructions given by a teacher in English but will need guidance to perform new routines and participate in remote learning, including modeling and visual support. Home language instructions for entirely new routines will help students understand expectations so they can focus on learning English.

Advanced-level students will understand much of what is being said to them, including complex sentences and multi-step instructions. They will respond with mostly accurate simple sentences and will likely be able to produce complex sentences when prompted, sometimes needing support and scaffolding to do so. These students will connect sentences with appropriate transitions and use some low-frequency, specialized words. These students can have conversational exchanges, seek clarification or explanation when they need it, and find a way to make themselves understood, even if through language forms not typically used by an English-native speaker.

> **Suggested supports.** Advanced-level students will be able to understand most instructions about novel remote learning circumstances in English. They will have the English proficiency to ask questions when they do not understand instructions, though in some cases they may hesitate to reach out for help. Modeling and visual support for new routines will help these students. Words and concepts related to distance learning may require explanation, since many of these words are not typically used in the classroom.

- ***Non-response or incomplete screening interview.*** Students who are unable to respond to any of the questions and/or prompts, or whose responses are unintelligible, will be provisionally identified at the **beginner** level.

- ***Native-like English proficiency.*** Students who respond to the advanced-level questions with native-like fluency and complexity may require only minimal supports (or none at all). Instructional supports and services will be provided, nonetheless, to address any potential lack of familiarity with the school system, technology, distance learning, cultural norms, and/or English academic language.

Questionnaire for Grades K-2 and Grades 3-5

Overall guidance for the interviewer:

- After introductory Questions 1 through 3, consider whether to continue in order or to jump to Question 6, if the student is providing responses that are intermediate or advanced.

- If possible, record the conversation (and inform the parent/guardian it will be recorded), so you can listen to the responses and score after the interview concludes.

- Please remember to prompt/encourage students to provide more detail in their responses, especially as the remote interview process poses greater challenges to interpersonal communication, without visual cues and facial expression.

For each question, note whether the student's answer matches the ***Beginner Responses*** column or the ***Intermediate*** and ***Advanced Responses*** column.

INTERVIEW RATER INSTRUCTIONS: The screener provides a holistic sense of English proficiency rather than a numeric score. Classify the response to each question according to the level that best represents the response. After Question 3, you will be prompted to pause and quickly assess whether to skip to a more advanced question for higher levels of proficiency.		
BEGINNER-LEVEL QUESTIONS		
Interview Question	**Beginner Response**	**Intermediate or Advanced Response**
1. What is your name? *If the student struggles:* Is it [*insert name*]?	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word or a basic phrase
2. **Grades K-2** Are you in [*CITY/TOWN*]? Tell me about it. **Grades 3-5** Is there a park close to where you live? Tell me about it.	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning

	Interview Question	Beginner Response	Intermediate or Advanced Response
	BEGINNER-LEVEL QUESTIONS, continued		
3.	When did you last watch TV, a movie, or video? What is your favorite show? What is your favorite movie/video? When did you last watch it? *If the student struggles:* Do you have a favorite song? Tell me more.	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning
	INTERVIEW RATER INSTRUCTIONS: If the student answers Questions 1-3 with intermediate/advanced responses, JUMP TO QUESTION 6.		
4.	What is your favorite color? Tell me three things that have this color. *If the student struggles:* What is your favorite sound? What makes that sound?	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning
5.	What do you see around you right now? (What else, tell me more, what's that, what color is it)? *If the student struggles:* Do you see a table? What is on the table? Do you see a bag? What is in the bag? *Interviewer should prompt students to give 3 objects with at least 1 trait each.* ***Note: if a video platform or device is being used, images could be sent via text message or the digital platform.***	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ May give a one-word answer and be unable to describe any object ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning

BEGINNER-LEVEL QUESTIONS, continued		
Interview Question	**Beginner Response**	**Intermediate or Advanced Response**
6.	What do you do for fun? Can you tell me more? (Ask a follow-up question for the student to describe the activity.) *Interviewer should prompt students to name an activity and give some details about that activity.*	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ May give a one-word answer, does not include details ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning
	Majority of marks under each of the three proficiency levels: *Under which column (classification) do most responses fall?*	◯ **STOP** the interview. Student is a provisional beginner.	◯ Proceed to asking Intermediate/ Advanced-level questions.

INTERVIEW RATER INSTRUCTIONS: The screener provides a holistic sense of English proficiency rather than a numeric score. Classify the response to each question according to the level that best represents the response.

- If a student has great difficulty in giving an answer on three or more questions, **STOP**. Classify this student as having **Beginning** proficiency in English.
- Otherwise, proceed to the next section.

	INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED-LEVEL QUESTIONS			

General Description of Expected Responses

Intermediate-level students will engage with all questions but may misunderstand some prompts, or responses may not be understood on all questions. Responses will not be grammatically accurate for all questions, or answers may be limited to simple language structures.

Advanced-level students will be able to answer all questions and provide more detail when prompted. They can make their point understood on all or all but one question. They may make grammatical errors, but errors do not impede communication.

	Interview Question	**Beginner Response**	**Intermediate Response**	**Advanced Response**
7.	**Grades K-2** Can you describe a favorite food you like to eat? *If the student struggles:* What is your favorite toy? Can you describe it? *Student can use the name for the* **food** *or* **toy** *in their language, and describe if hot or cold, hard or soft, etc.* **Grades 3-5** Someone asks you how to get to the nearest place to buy food. What would you say? ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Provides single-word response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	❍ Answer can generally be understood ❍ Includes high-frequency vocabulary and common phrases ❍ Uses simple sentences with few transitions, attempts to use complex sentences may interfere with understanding ❍ Includes brief pauses when searching for words or attempting to restate or clarify, word choice may obscure meaning ❍ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	❍ Provides details with well-connected sentences, using some specialized, low-frequency words ❍ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ❍ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning
8.	What is the difference between wet and dry weather? Or hot and cold weather? (What activities do you do? What clothing/shoes do you wear?) ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Provides single-word response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	❍ Answer can generally be understood ❍ Includes high-frequency vocabulary and common phrases ❍ Uses simple sentences with few transitions, attempts to use complex sentences may interfere with understanding ❍ Includes brief pauses when searching for words or attempting to restate or clarify, word choice may obscure meaning ❍ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	❍ Compares and contrasts ❍ Provides details with well-connected sentences, using some specialized, low-frequency words ❍ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ❍ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning

		INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED-LEVEL QUESTIONS, continued		
	Interview Question	**Beginner Response**	**Intermediate Response**	**Advanced Response**
9.	**Select one:** Tell me about a place you really like. Why do you like it? *If the student struggles:* Describe that place. Who also goes to that place? **OR** What do you think is the most dangerous/exciting sport? Tell me why. ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Provides single-word response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	❍ Student is able to answer and provide a reason ❍ Answer can generally be understood ❍ Includes high-frequency vocabulary and common phrases ❍ Uses simple sentences with few transitions, attempts to use complex sentences may interfere with understanding ❍ Includes brief pauses when searching for words or attempting to restate or clarify, word choice may obscure meaning ❍ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	❍ Articulates and supports an opinion fluently ❍ Provides details with well-connected sentences, using some specialized, low-frequency words ❍ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ❍ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning
10.	If you could meet one famous person, who would it be, and why? *If the student struggles:* If you could choose to have one new talent, what would it be, and why? ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Provides single-word response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	❍ Responds using "I will" or just states the answer ❍ Answer can generally be understood ❍ Includes high-frequency vocabulary and common phrases ❍ Uses simple sentences with few transitions, attempts to use complex sentences may interfere with understanding ❍ Includes brief pauses when searching for words or attempting to restate or clarify ❍ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	❍ Responds to the prompt using "I would…" ❍ Provides details with well-connected sentences, using some specialized, low-frequency words ❍ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ❍ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning

INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED-LEVEL QUESTIONS, continued			
	Interview Question	**Beginner Response**	**Intermediate Response**	**Advanced Response**
11.	**Select one:** Describe the rules of a game you played as a child. **OR** Describe what a school day was like for you in the past. ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	○ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ○ Provides single-word response ○ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ○ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	○ Responds to prompt with common words and phrases ○ Sentences demonstrate some sequencing with simple connective words (game question) ○ Response describes their experience using high-frequency words and common phrases (school day question) ○ Answer can generally be understood ○ Uses simple sentences with few transitions, attempts to use complex sentences may interfere with understanding ○ Includes brief pauses when searching for words or attempting to restate or clarify ○ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	○ Student can fluently sequence sentences to describe rules and routines using appropriate connective words ○ Uses some specialized, low-frequency words ○ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ○ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning
	Majority of marks under each of the three proficiency levels: ***Under which column (classification) do most responses fall?***	○	○	○

INTERVIEW RATER INSTRUCTIONS: The screener provides a holistic sense of English proficiency rather than a numeric score. Classify the response to each question according to the level that best represents the response.

- If the student **cannot answer three or more questions** appropriately, the student is a **Beginner**.
- If the student is able to answer all questions, assess whether there are **more responses** in the **intermediate** column or **advanced** column for a final placement.

Questionnaire for Grades 6-12

Overall guidance for the interviewer:

- After introductory Questions 1 through 3, consider whether to continue in order or to jump to Question 6, if the student is providing responses that are intermediate or advanced.

- If possible, record the conversation (and inform the parent/guardian it will be recorded), so you can listen to the responses and score after the interview concludes.

- Please remember to prompt/encourage students to provide more detail in their responses, especially as the remote interview process poses greater challenges to interpersonal communication, without visual cues and facial expression.

For each question, note whether the student's answer matches the *Beginner Responses* column or the *Intermediate* and *Advanced Responses* column.

INTERVIEW RATER INSTRUCTIONS: The screener provides a holistic sense of English proficiency rather than a numeric score. Classify the response to each question according to the level that best represents the response. You will be prompted to pause after Question 3 to assess whether to skip to a question for higher levels of proficiency.		
BEGINNER-LEVEL QUESTIONS		
Interview Question	**Beginner Response**	**Intermediate or Advanced Response**
1. What is your name? *If the student struggles:* Is it [*NAME*]?	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate	❍ Responds appropriately with one word or a basic phrase
2. Are you in [*CITY/TOWN*]?	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning

BEGINNER-LEVEL QUESTIONS, continued		
Interview Question	**Beginner Response**	**Intermediate or Advanced Response**
3. When did you last watch TV, a movie, video? What is your favorite show? What is your favorite movie/video? When did you last watch it? *If the student struggles:* Do you have a favorite song? Tell me more.	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning
INTERVIEW RATER INSTRUCTIONS: If the students answer Questions 1-3 with intermediate/advanced responses, JUMP TO QUESTION 6.		
4. What is your favorite color? Tell me three things that have this color. *If the student struggles:* What is your favorite sound? What makes that sound?	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning
5. What do you see around you right now? (What else, tell me more, what's that, what color is it)? *If the student struggles:* Do you see a table? What is on the table? Do you see a bag? What is in the bag? *Interviewer should prompt students to give 3 objects with at least 1 trait each.* ***Note: if a video platform or device is being used, images could be sent via text message or the digital platform.***	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning

	BEGINNER-LEVEL QUESTIONS, continued		
	Interview Question	**Beginner Response**	**Intermediate or Advanced Response**
6.	What do you do for fun? Can you tell me more? (Ask a follow-up question for student to describe the activity.) *Interviewer should prompt students to name an activity and give some details about that activity.*	❍ No response, or response is unintelligible ❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Grammatical errors and limited or erroneous word choice impede meaning	❍ Responds appropriately with one word, a basic phrase, or a more detailed response ❍ Pronunciation, word choice, and grammatical errors do not impede meaning
	Majority of marks under each of the three proficiency levels: ***Under which column (classification) do most responses fall?***	◯ **STOP** the interview. Student is a provisional beginner.	◯ Proceed to asking Intermediate/ Advanced-level questions.

INTERVIEW RATER INSTRUCTIONS: The screener provides a holistic sense of English proficiency rather than a numeric score. Classify the response to each question according to the level that best represents the response.

- If a student has great difficulty in giving an answer on three or more questions, **STOP**. Classify this student as having **Beginning** proficiency in English.
- Otherwise, proceed to the next section.

| | INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED-LEVEL QUESTIONS | | | |

INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED-LEVEL QUESTIONS

General Description of Expected Responses

Intermediate-level students will engage with all questions but may misunderstand some prompts, or responses may not be understood on all questions. Responses will not be grammatically accurate for all questions, or answers may be limited to simple language structures.

Advanced-level students will be able to answer all questions and provide more detail when prompted. They can make their point understood on all or all but one question. They may make grammatical errors, but errors do not impede communication.

	Interview Question	Beginner Response	Intermediate Response	Advanced Response
7.	Someone asks you how to get to the nearest place to buy food. What would you say? ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	○ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ○ Provides single-word response ○ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ○ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	○ Gives an answer using high-frequency vocabulary and common phrases ○ Uses simple sentences with a few transitions ○ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	○ Provides details with well-connected sentences, using some specialized, low-frequency words ○ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ○ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning
8.	What is the difference between wet and dry weather? Or hot and cold weather? (What activities do you do? What clothing/shoes do you wear?) ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	○ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ○ Provides single-word response ○ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ○ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	○ Answer can generally be understood ○ Includes high-frequency vocabulary and common phrases ○ Uses simple sentences with few transitions, attempts to use complex sentences may interfere with understanding ○ Includes brief pauses when searching for words or attempting to restate or clarify, word choice may obscure meaning ○ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	○ Compares and contrasts fluently ○ Provides details with well-connected sentences, using some specialized, low-frequency words ○ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ○ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning

	Interview Question	Beginner Response	Intermediate Response	Advanced Response
	INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED-LEVEL QUESTIONS, continued			
9.	**Select one:** Tell me about a place you really like. Why do you like it? *If the student struggles:* Describe that place. Who also goes to that place? **OR** What do you think is the most dangerous/exciting sport? Tell me why. ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Provides single-word response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	❍ Student is able to answer and provide a reason ❍ Answer can generally be understood ❍ Includes high-frequency vocabulary and common phrases ❍ Uses simple sentences with few transitions, attempts to use complex sentences may interfere with understanding ❍ Includes brief pauses when searching for words or attempting to restate or clarify, word choice may obscure meaning ❍ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	❍ Articulates and supports an opinion fluently ❍ Provides details with well-connected sentences, using some specialized, low-frequency words ❍ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ❍ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning
10.	If you could meet one famous person, who would it be, and why? *If the student struggles:* If you could choose to have one new talent, what would it be, and why? ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	❍ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ❍ Provides single-word response ❍ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ❍ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	❍ Responds to the prompt using "I will" or just states the answer ❍ Answer can generally be understood ❍ Student attempts to use complex sentences, but these may interfere with understanding ❍ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	❍ Responds to the prompt using "I would…" ❍ Provides details with well-connected sentences, using some specialized, including hypothetical, low-frequency words ❍ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ❍ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning

	Interview Question	Beginner Response	Intermediate Response	Advanced Response
11.	**Select one:** Describe the rules of a game you played as a child. **OR** Describe what a school day was like for you in the past. ***Note: Student may need prompting for more detail.***	◯ "I don't know," or student may not give appropriate response ◯ Provides single-word response ◯ Frequent and long pauses (halting, choppy) in attempt to communicate ◯ Pronunciation errors impede meaning	◯ Uses simple signal words for sequencing (game question) ◯ Response describes their experience using high-frequency words and common phrases (school day question) ◯ Answer can generally be understood ◯ Uses simple sentences with few transitions, attempts to use complex sentences may interfere with understanding ◯ Includes brief pauses when searching for words or attempting to restate or clarify ◯ Pronunciation and grammatical errors mostly do not impede meaning	◯ Student can fluently sequence sentences to describe rules and routines using appropriate connective words ◯ Uses some specialized, low-frequency words ◯ Includes few brief pauses, speech is fairly sustained with minor choppiness ◯ Few pronunciation errors and grammatical errors but none impede meaning
	Majority of marks under each of the three proficiency levels: ***Under which column (classification) do most responses fall?***	◯	◯	◯

INTERVIEW RATER INSTRUCTIONS: The screener provides a holistic sense of English proficiency rather than a numeric score. Classify the response to each question according to the level that best represents the response.

- If the student **cannot answer three or more questions** appropriately, the student is a **Beginner.**
- If the student is able to answer all questions, assess whether there are **more responses** in the **intermediate** column or **advanced** column for a final placement.

Section D

Writing Assessment (Optional)

Writing (Optional)
Use a writing prompt to determine if the student has writing skills in English. The interviewer can verbally provide the prompt or if using a virtual platform, the prompt can also be displayed on the screen for the student to reference. The interviewer should select from the sample prompts below based on what may be more likely to elicit a response from the student.

12.	**Prompt (presented verbally or in writing):** Using complete sentences, tell me about A, B, or C. Try to include at least three details. A. A family member or friend B. A favorite story you know C. A sport you enjoy playing/watching OR a favorite athlete/player

	Beginner Response	**Intermediate Response**	**Advanced Response**
Sentence Level	❍ Is (not) minimally comprehensible ❍ Includes minimal, irrelevant, or no supporting details ❍ Uses short phrases and fragments (not complete sentences) or short, simple sentences	❍ Is mostly comprehensible ❍ Includes some relevant supporting details ❍ Uses complete sentences and attempts complex and compound structures	❍ Is fully comprehensible ❍ Includes many relevant supporting details ❍ Uses complete sentences with purposeful use of varying structure and uses complex structures
Vocabulary	❍ Contains common simple, high frequency vocabulary ❍ Vocabulary errors and usage obscure meaning	❍ Contains some repetition and range of vocabulary ❍ Occasional vocabulary errors obscure meaning ❍ Includes simple signal words, like conjunctions (e.g., before, when, or, because)	❍ Uses high level, precise vocabulary showing a sense of word choice ❍ Variation and range of vocabulary is sufficient to express ideas, and includes signal words—like conjunctions—to show time, cause/effect and compare/contrast (e.g., until, leads to, also, however)
Grammar and Syntax	❍ Contains very simple syntax in English, repetitive phrases and grammatical structures, or is mostly a word-for-word restatement of the prompt ❍ May use invented spelling, may include primary language phonics, may include frequent grammatical errors (punctuation, spelling, capitalization) that interfere with meaning	❍ Contains mostly correct but simple English syntax (e.g., simple pattern using present/past tense, subject-verb agreement) or may use syntax of the home language (e.g., noun-adjective order) ❍ Use of grammatical conventions (e.g., capitalization, punctuation, and spelling) partially correct and may distract from meaning	❍ Uses correct grammar and English syntax ❍ Uses correct verb tenses ❍ Uses capitalization, punctuation, and spelling with few errors that interfere with meaning

Section E

Description of Questions by Typology and Skills Examined

BEGINNER-LEVEL QUESTIONS	
Interview Question	**Skill Tested**
1. What is your name? *If the student struggles:* Is it [*insert name*]?	**Listening** – English basic phrase **Speaking**
2. **Grades K-12** Are you in [*CITY/TOWN*]? Tell me about it. **Grades 3-5** Is there a park close to where you live? Tell me about it.	**Listening** – **yes/no** question **Speaking**
3. **When** did you last watch TV, a movie, video? **What** is your favorite show? **What** is your favorite movie/video? **When** did you last watch it? *If the student struggles:* Do you have a favorite song? Tell me more.	**Listening** – **wh** question **Speaking**
4. **What** is your favorite color? Tell me three things that have this color. *If the student struggles:* **What** is your favorite sound? What makes that sound?	**Listening** – ("or") **understanding** you need to choose one **Speaking** – **describe** preference
5. **What** do you see around you right now? (What else, tell me more, what's that, what color is it)? *If the student struggles:* Do you see a table? What is on the table? Do you see a bag? What is in the bag?	**Listening** – **understanding** the prompt **Speaking** – **name** objects and **describe** them with adjectives
6. **What** do you do for fun? Can you tell me more? (Ask a follow-up question for the student to describe the activity.)	**Listening** – **understanding** the prompt **Speaking** – using words and phrases about self and others, and if applicable, sequence of steps

INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED LEVEL QUESTIONS	
Interview Question	**Skill Tested**
7. **Grades K-2** Can you describe a favorite food you like to eat? *If the student struggles:* What is your favorite toy? Can you describe it? **Grades 3-12** Someone asks you how to get to the nearest place to buy food. What would you say?	**Grades K-2** **Listening** – **understanding** the prompt **Speaking** – express preference for an object and describe it with adjectives **Grades 3-12** **Listening** – **understanding** the prompt **Speaking** – using words to indicate direction
8. What is the difference between wet and dry weather? Or hot and cold weather? (What activities do you do? What clothing/shoes do you wear?)	**Listening** – **understanding** the prompt **Speaking** – **compare and contrast**
9. **Select one:** Tell me about a place you really like. Why do you like it? *If the student struggles:* Describe that place. Who also goes to that place? **OR** What do you think is the most dangerous/exciting sport? Tell me why.	**Speaking** – **articulate** and support an opinion
10. If you could meet one famous person, who would it be, and why? *If the student struggles:* If you could choose to have one new talent, what would it be, and why?	**Speaking** – **conditional constructions**
11. **Select one:** Describe the rules of a game you played as a child. **OR** Describe what a school day was like for you in the past.	Can **sequence sentences** using appropriate **connective words** using vocabulary outside of immediate experience

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Council Member Districts

Albuquerque, Anchorage, Arlington (Texas), Atlanta, Aurora (Colorado), Austin, Baltimore, Birmingham, Boston, Bridgeport, Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale), Buffalo, Charleston County, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cincinnati, Clark County (Las Vegas), Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Dayton, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Duval County (Jacksonville), El Paso, Fort Worth, Fresno, Guilford County (Greensboro, N.C.), Hawaii, Hillsborough County (Tampa), Houston, Indianapolis, Jackson, Jefferson County (Louisville), Kansas City, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Manchester, Miami-Dade County, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Nashville, New Orleans, New York City, Newark, Norfolk, Oakland, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Orange County (Orlando), Palm Beach County, Philadelphia, Pinellas County, Pittsburgh, Portland, Providence, Puerto Rico, Richmond, Rochester, Sacramento, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Ana, Seattle, Shelby County, St. Louis, St. Paul, Stockton, Toledo, Toronto, Tulsa, Washington, D.C., Washoe, and Wichita