



v3.0

Idaho ELL Placement Test

Examiner Manual

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview.....	3
Administration Guidelines	4
Score Interpretation.....	5
Scope and Sequence Tables.....	6

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Overview

Purpose of the Assessment. The purpose of the Idaho ELL Placement Test is to inform placement decisions for new English Language Learners in Idaho schools. The test assesses the student’s proficiency in the domains of speaking/listening, reading, and writing. This test does not take the place of the IELA (the federally mandated annual assessment for all English Language Learners in the State of Idaho), nor is it designed to be used to determine which level of the IELA to administer to individual students.

Per federal guidelines, all students who indicate a home language other than English during registration/enrollment, must be tested for their English language proficiency and potential placement into a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) program. A student in an LEP program must be provided a specific language development program. Identification for placement must take place within 30 days of registration or 15 days upon enrollment.

Purpose of the Manual. This Examiner Manual provides procedural information for administering all forms of the Idaho ELL Placement Test. In addition, the manual contains guidelines for using the scores in making placement decisions, as well as Scope and Sequence tables for each form. All Examiners should read through the entire manual before administering the test for the first time.

Structure and Format of the Test. The Idaho ELL Placement Test is individually administered. It takes approximately 25-35 minutes, depending on the student’s proficiency. There are five grade-level test forms.

(Note: For new students entering in the Spring of Grade 1, a school may opt to use the P-2 test rather than the P-1, and for students entering in the Spring of Grade 3, the P-3 test rather than the P-2. This is at the discretion of the Testing Coordinator.)

Grade Span	Form
K–1	P-1
2–3	P-2
4–5	P-3
6–8	P-4
9–12	P-5

Each test is divided into 3 sections, which are scored separately: Speaking/Listening, Reading, and Writing.

Test Materials. Materials needed to test each student include:

- 1 Record Form (consumable)
- 1 Writing Response Sheet (consumable)
- 1 Prompt Book (reusable)

All of these materials are grade-span specific. The Record Form contains the script for administering each item as well as space to record the student’s score for each item. The Writing Response Sheet contains space for student responses to the Writing items. The Prompt Book contains illustrations and printed prompts used for the Speaking/Listening and Reading sections. Both the Examiner and the student will need a pencil, and the Examiner will need a stopwatch to administer the Fluency part of the Reading test.

Examiner Preparation. Before administering the test for the first time, Examiners need to prepare in the following way.

1. Read through the entire Examiner Manual. Do this with highlighter in hand, marking key points to remember.
2. Read through the script and scoring instructions of the Record Forms for all levels of the test you expect to administer. Pay close attention to variations in scoring instructions. Note whether a complete sentence is required. For some items, a response must be grammatically correct in order to score the point, while other items require only the ability to communicate an idea in English.
3. Optional—Role-play test administration with a colleague or a child. This is an excellent way to become familiar with the test and the individual items.

Administration Guidelines

Setting. The Placement Test should be administered one-to-one in a quiet setting free from distractions. The Examiner will have the Record Form in front of him or her. The student will at different times have the Prompt Book or the Writing Response Sheet in front of him or her. The Examiner will frequently point to things in the student's Prompt Book or Writing Response Sheet. Therefore, if the Examiner is right-handed, it may be easiest to have the student seated on the Examiner's left. Then the Examiner can point with the left hand and mark the scores with the right hand. If the Examiner is left-handed, it may be more convenient to seat the student at the Examiner's right.

Before Starting the Test. Try to put the student at ease. Tell the student that you are going to give them a test to see how much English they know. Tell them not to worry if they don't know some of the answers. Tell them the test will last about half an hour. This introduction may be done in English, in the student's native language (if the Examiner is fluent in that language), or with the aid of a translator. However, once the test is begun, "English only" is the rule. If you have been talking to the student in his or her native language, explain that you both will speak only in English once the test begins. Smile reassuringly and frequently.

Script. The script for administering the test is in the Record Form. Make sure you follow the script. Do not rephrase a question because the student did not understand. Being able to understand the questions is part of the assessment.

Repeating a Question. You may always repeat a question if there was a distraction such as a loud noise or a person entering the room. Certain questions are also marked that they may be repeated once at the student's request.

Scoring Responses. Score each response by writing the score in the "Score" column. Most items are scored 0 or 1, but there are some 2-point items (dependent on the Form). The maximum number of points for an item is listed in the "Pts" column. Acceptable responses are listed in the "Acceptable Responses" column. Use

your common sense and good judgment when scoring a response that is a variation on the responses listed in that column. Please keep in mind that you are not doing the student any favors if you are lenient in your scoring. The purpose of this assessment is to get a realistic picture of whether or not the student needs English language development services.

Administering the Speaking/Listening Comprehension Task. The final part of the Speaking/Listening test consists of a set of content questions about an orally presented story or lecture. Since it may be onerous for the Examiner to re-read the story to each student, the Examiner has the option of recording the story ahead of time, and having the student listen to a tape or CD of the story. Make sure, however, that the quality of the recording is good.

Administering the Reading Fluency Task. The final part of the Reading test at each level is a fluency passage which the student reads aloud for up to two minutes. Immediately after reading the passage, the student answers two questions (one main idea, one detail) to demonstrate comprehension. During the first 60 seconds while the student reads aloud, the Examiner marks each misread or omitted word (on the Examiner copy of the text) as the student reads. Self-corrected words are not marked as errors. After 60 seconds, the Examiner stops marking errors and allows the student to continue reading for an additional minute. The extra time allows the student to finish enough of the passage to answer the comprehension questions that follow. The second minute is not to be used for fluency determination, only for comprehension purposes. After testing, subtract the total errors from the total words read to get the correct words per minute score (cwpm). Use the box on the following page. Then, convert the cwpm score to points, which are added into the total Reading score. Note that the points are dependent on the student's grade level (except in grades 6–8 and 9–12).

Administering the Test at the Beginning of Fall Kindergarten. At the beginning of Fall Kindergarten, only the Speaking/Listening subtest should be administered; Reading and Writing should be omitted. Later in the first half of the school year, the Test Coordinator may choose to have the entire test administered to incoming Kindergarten students. In Spring Kindergarten, all three subtests should definitely be administered to incoming students.

Stopping the Test. Stop a subtest (Speaking/Listening, Reading, or Writing) if a student gets six in a row wrong. Go on to the next test. For example, if the student got six in a row wrong on the Reading test, the Examiner would skip the rest of the Reading test, and go on to the Writing test. The student must attempt to take all three subtests (Speaking/Listening, Reading, and Writing). Examiners must not halt the entire test if a student has not yet taken one of the subtests.

Scoring the Test. After testing, add up each of the three subtest scores (Speaking/Listening, Reading, and Writing), and write the score at the end of the section, and on the front cover. On the Record Form cover, add the subtest scores to get an Overall Score. Circle or highlight the proficiency level corresponding to each of these raw scores.

Getting Help. If you have questions about test administration or scoring, email the IELA Coordinator at iela@QuestarAI.com.

Score Interpretation

The main purpose of the Idaho ELL Placement Test is to assist in making appropriate instructional placements for incoming English language learners (ELLs) into specific language development programs. This test is not intended as a measure of progress, and under normal circumstances, will only be administered upon a student's initial entry. The test should never be used for exiting students from a language development program.

Proficiency Levels. Results are reported at three levels of proficiency: Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced. These levels do not correspond directly to the levels at which IELA results are reported (and thus were named more generically). The following general descriptors apply:

- **Beginning**—student's understanding and use of English is very limited.
- **Intermediate**—student can understand and use English for social purposes but has limited understanding and use of academic English.
- **Advanced**—student can understand and use English for both social and academic purposes but still has limitations on his or her proficiency/fluency.

In addition to providing information about English proficiency overall, the test provides information about proficiency in the language domains.

Grade and Time of Year. Up through grade 5, different cut scores are reported for each season (Fall and Spring) and each grade. In grades 6 through 8, and grades 9 through 12, there is only one set of cut scores for each season by grade span. The different score bands for Fall and Spring of the year reflect an assumption that, depending on the time of year, the situation into which students are arriving will be different. Students arriving in the Spring will be coming into a situation where a significant amount of instruction has already taken place.

Using Test Information. The results of the Idaho ELL Placement Test should be used for both identification and appropriate program placement.

Identification. Those students who receive an Overall score that places them below the Advanced level should be considered candidates for ELL services.

For those students who receive an Overall score at the Advanced level, the Examiner must review their scores on each of the Placement subtests (Speaking/Listening, Reading, and Writing). If a student tests at Advanced on each of the subtests, then it is likely that the student is not currently in need of ELL services and placement into a language development program.

Placement. For the student who scores Advanced overall but lower on one or more of the subtests, this student is most likely in need of services to increase the language proficiency in any one domain. Support services should be structured according to a student's needs (i.e., strengths and weaknesses). Therefore, the student's relative strengths across the subtests will inform the Educational Learning Plan (ELP), accommodations on assessments, and the need for differentiated instruction.

As with any single measure of proficiency, the results of this test should be considered along with other available information, inclusive of prior school/district records, prior assessment data, and qualified teacher judgments, if available.

Scope and Sequence Tables

Form P-1 (Grades K–1) Speaking/Listening

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–2	Social English	Ability to respond to standard social greeting in English
3–4	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: nouns
5, 7	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: verbs
6	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: superlative adjectives
8	Academic English	Understanding meaning of “the same/different”
9–12	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: nouns
13–14	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: verbs
15	Academic English	Understanding content-area phrase: “how many” Receptive English: prepositions
16	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: prepositions, idioms Productive English vocabulary: nouns
17–19	Social English	Ability to answer personal questions Ability to express likes/dislikes in English
20	Academic English	Ability to count to 10 in English
21–22	Academic English	Ability to understand simple classroom directions
23	Academic English	Ability to repeat a simple 3-word phrase
24	Academic English	Ability to repeat a simple rhyme
25–26	Oral Comprehension	Ability to answer detail questions about a story heard in English
27	Oral Comprehension	Ability to understand and remember dialogue in a story
28	Oral Comprehension	Ability to answer character questions about a story heard in English

Form P-1 (Grades K–1) Reading

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1	Alphabet	Ability to recite the alphabet in English
2	Letter Recognition	Ability to distinguish letters from non-letters
3–5	Letter Recognition	Ability to recognize letters by name
6–7	Letter Knowledge	Ability to name letters
8	Print Concepts	Print concept: left to right
9–10	Reading Words	Ability to decode 3-letter regular cvc* words
11–19	Reading Words	Ability to decode short, common words of increasing difficulty
20–21	Reading Phrases	Ability to read high frequency English words presented in a short phrase
22–23	Reading Sentences	Ability to read a simple English sentence
24–25	Reading Comprehension	Ability to comprehend the main idea and details of low-DRP ** text
26	Reading Fluency	Ability to read low-DRP ** text with grade-appropriate speed and accuracy

* consonant-vowel-consonant

** Degrees of Reading Power (DRP®)

Form P-1 (Grades K–1) Writing

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–3	Classroom Vocabulary; Writing Readiness	Understanding of basic directions associated with writing skills
4	Letters	Ability to write some letters
5	Writing Words	Ability to write own name
6	Writing Words	Ability to write a 2-letter, phonetically regular English word
7–9	Writing Words	Ability to write some regular short-vowel cvc* English words, with actual or phonetic spelling
10	Writing Words	Ability to write a common long-vowel, silent-e English word, with actual or phonetic spelling
11–12	Writing Sentences	Ability to write an English sentence, with words separated by spaces; phonetic spelling is acceptable

* consonant-vowel-consonant

Form P-2 (Grades 2–3) Speaking/Listening

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–2	Social English	Ability to respond to standard social greeting in English
3–4	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English: nouns
5	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English: verbs
6	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English: superlative adjectives
7–10	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English: nouns
11	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English: verbs
12–13	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English: nouns (more complex oral prompt)
14	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English: adjectives
15	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English: nouns (more complex oral prompt)
16–17	Oral English	Productive English: ability to describe an action
18	Academic English	Knowledge of English number names: 2-digit numbers
19	Academic English: content area vocabulary	Ability to state a basic math equality in English
20–22	Social English	Ability to talk about self and to express likes in English
23	Academic English	Understanding two-part classroom directions
24	Oral Fluency	Ability to repeat a simple sentence in English
25	Oral Comprehension	Ability to identify the main character
26	Oral Comprehension	Ability to answer questions about main problem in a story
27	Oral Comprehension	Ability to describe a character's feelings
28	Oral Comprehension	Ability to tell what happened
29	Oral Comprehension	Ability to describe a character's feelings

Form P-2 (Grades 2–3) Reading

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–3	Letter Knowledge	Ability to name letters
4	Print Concepts	Ability to recognize the question mark symbol
5	Print Concepts	Ability to recognize a capital letter as such
6	Print Concepts	Understanding the use of a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence and ability to express this concept in English
7	Reading Words	Ability to read a regular cvc* English word
8	Reading Words	Ability to read a high-frequency English word beginning with a digraph
9–13	Reading Phrases	Ability to read high-frequency English words presented in a short phrase
14	Reading Sentences	Ability to read simple English sentences, typical of grade-level narrative text
15–16	Reading Sentences	Ability to read simple English sentences, typical of grade-level content area text
17–18	Reading Comprehension	Ability to comprehend the main idea and details of simple English prose
19	Reading Fluency: Speed & Accuracy	Ability to read aloud simple English prose with grade-level speed and accuracy

* consonant-vowel-consonant

Form P-2 (Grades 2–3) Writing

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–2	Letter and Case	Ability to write letters with specified name and case
3–4	Phonic Knowledge	Ability to write digraphs that make a specified sound
5	Spelling; Phonic Knowledge	Ability to write a high-frequency, three-letter, phonetically regular word
6–8	Spelling; Phonic Knowledge	Ability to write high-frequency, four-letter words
9–12	Spelling; Punctuation; Capitalization	Ability to write simple English sentences beginning with a capital letter and ending with a period

Form P-3 (Grades 4–5) Speaking/Listening

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–2	Social English	Ability to respond to standard social greeting in English
3	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: nouns
4	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: nouns and verbs
5	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: verbs
6–8	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: nouns
9	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: adjectives
10–11	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English: ability to describe an action
12	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English: nouns (more complex oral prompt)
13	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: spatial prepositions
14–15	Oral Vocabulary & Syntax	Ability to describe an action with a complete sentence
16	Academic English	Knowledge of math vocabulary
17	Academic English	Ability to comprehend a content-area explanation
18	Social English	Ability to talk about self; express likes/dislikes in English
19	Social English	Ability to express likes/dislikes in English and give reasons
20	Academic English	Ability to comprehend a content-area problem
21	Academic English	Ability to comprehend task-related classroom directions
22	Oral Fluency	Ability to accurately repeat a content-area sentence
23–26	Oral Comprehension	Ability to understand and answer questions about orally presented content-area material

Form P-3 (Grades 4–5) Reading

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–9	Reading Words	Ability to read high-frequency English words
10–15	Reading Phrases	Ability to read relatively high-frequency English words presented in a short phrase
16	Reading Sentences	Ability to read simple English sentences, typical of grade-level narrative text
17–20	Reading Sentences	Ability to read English sentences, typical of grade-level content-area text
21–22	Reading Comprehension	Ability to comprehend the main idea and details of grade-level text
23	Reading Fluency	Ability to read grade-level text with grade-appropriate speed and accuracy

Form P-3 (Grades 4–5) Writing

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1	Letter Knowledge	Knowledge of English letter names; understanding of <i>capital</i> and <i>lowercase</i>
2	Phonic Knowledge	Letter-sound correlations
3	Phonic Knowledge	Knowledge of English digraphs
4	Writing Words	Ability to write phonetically regular cvc* English words
5–9	Writing Words	Ability to write high-frequency English words
10–14	Vocabulary of Literacy	Understanding of English composition vocabulary: <i>question mark, comma, quotation marks, sentence, paragraph</i>
15–17	Writing Sentences	Ability to write dictated sentences (typical of sentences a student would write in the content areas); ability to capitalize and punctuate correctly
18	Rewriting Sentences	Ability to change a verb from present to past tense; ability to understand editorial directions
19	Rewriting Sentences	Ability to change a statement from positive to negative; ability to understand editorial directions
20–23	Multiple-Choice Grammar	Knowledge of English grammar

* consonant-vowel-consonant

Form P-4 (Grades 6–8) Speaking/Listening

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–2	Social English	Ability to respond to standard social greeting in English
3	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: nouns
4	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: verbs
5	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: nouns and verbs
6	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: adjectives
7–12	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: nouns and verbs
13	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: spatial prepositions
14–15	Oral Vocabulary & Syntax	Ability to describe an action with a complete sentence
16	Academic Vocabulary	Knowledge of basic math vocabulary
17	Academic English	Ability to comprehend an orally presented content-area explanation
18	Social English	Ability to talk about self; ability to express likes/dislikes in English and give reasons
19	Social English	Ability to talk about self; ability to express likes/dislikes in English and give reasons; AND ability to express ideas in a grammatically correct complete sentence
20	Social English	Ability to answer a hypothetical question using the auxiliary verb <i>would</i>
21	Academic English	Ability to comprehend an orally presented content-area problem
22	Academic English	Ability to comprehend task-related classroom directions
23	Oral Fluency	Ability to accurately repeat a content-area sentence in English
24–27	Oral Comprehension	Ability to understand and answer questions about orally presented content-area material

Form P-4 (Grades 6–8) Reading

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–8	Reading Words	Ability to read high-frequency English words
9–15	Reading Academic Phrases	Ability to read phrases typical of grade-level content-area material
16–20	Reading Academic Sentences	Ability to read sentences typical of grade-level content-area text, including dialogue and directions
21–22	Reading Comprehension	Ability to comprehend the main idea and details of grade-level text
23	Reading Fluency	Ability to read grade-level text with grade-appropriate speed and accuracy

Form P-4 (Grades 6–8) Writing

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–4	Vocabulary of Literacy	Comprehension of English composition vocabulary: <i>question mark, comma, sentence, paragraph</i>
5	Writing Words	Ability to write phonetically regular cvc* English words
6–14	Writing Words	Ability to write high-frequency English words of increasing difficulty
15–17	Writing Sentences	Ability to write dictated sentences (typical of sentences a student would write in the content areas); ability to capitalize and punctuate correctly
18	Rewriting Sentences	Ability to change a verb from present to past tense; ability to understand editorial directions
19	Rewriting Sentences	Ability to change a statement from positive to negative; ability to understand editorial directions
20–23	Multiple Choice Grammar	Knowledge of English grammar

* consonant-vowel-consonant

Form P-5 (Grades 9–12) Speaking/Listening

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–2	Social English	Ability to respond to standard social greeting in English
3–5	Oral Vocabulary	Receptive English vocabulary: nouns & verbs
6–7	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: nouns
8	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: adjectives
9	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: verbs
10–12	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: nouns
13	Oral Vocabulary	Productive English vocabulary: spatial prepositions
14–15	Oral Production	Ability to describe an action with a complete sentence
16–17	Academic English	Knowledge of basic math vocabulary in English
18	Academic English	Ability to comprehend a content-area explanation
19	Social English	Ability to talk about self; ability to express likes/dislikes in English and give reasons
20	Social English	Ability to answer a hypothetical question using the auxiliary verb <i>would</i>
21	Academic English	Ability to name and discuss a book that was read
22	Academic English	Ability to comprehend a content-area problem
23	Academic English	Ability to comprehend task-related classroom directions
24	Academic English	Ability to accurately repeat a content-area sentence
25–28	Academic English	Ability to comprehend and answer questions about a content-area lecture

Form P-5 (Grades 9–12) Reading

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–8	Reading Words	Ability to read high-frequency English words
9–15	Reading Academic Phrases	Ability to read phrases typical of grade-level content-area material
16–20	Reading Academic Sentences	Ability to read sentences typical of grade-level content-area text
21–22	Reading Comprehension	Ability to comprehend the main idea and details of grade-level text
23	Reading Fluency	Ability to read grade-level text with grade-appropriate speed and accuracy

Form P-5 (Grades 9–12) Writing

Item #	Assessment Area	Specifically assesses
1–4	Vocabulary of Literacy	Comprehension of English composition vocabulary: <i>question mark, apostrophe, sentence, paragraph</i>
5	Writing Words	Ability to write phonetically regular cvc* English words
6–14	Writing Words	Ability to write high-frequency English words of increasing difficulty
15–17	Writing Sentences	Ability to write dictated sentences (typical of sentences a student would write in the content areas); ability to capitalize and punctuate correctly.
18	Rewriting Sentences	Ability to change a verb from present to past tense; ability to understand editorial directions
19	Rewriting Sentences	Ability to change a statement from positive to negative; ability to understand editorial directions
20–23	Multiple-Choice Grammar	Knowledge of English grammar

* consonant-vowel-consonant



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