

## Formative Assessment for English Language Learners:

- In addition to formatively assessing mastery of content, ELL students should be formatively assessed for their language growth, as well.
- In order to track each student's language growth, at least once per quarter, the **WIDA Writing and Speaking Rubrics** should be used to score student writing and oral discussion.
- Use the WIDA Writing Rubric and WIDA Speaking Rubric Overview and Scoring Protocols below to guide your assessment.

## WIDA Writing and Speaking Rubrics Overview:

The WIDA Writing and Speaking Rubrics represent a standards-referenced approach, allowing teachers to judge the extent to which a student has met expectations for particular language proficiency levels within writing and speaking. It contains six (6) levels of proficiency, associated with expectations based on linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage, and language forms and conventions:

- **Linguistic complexity** refers to a student's amount and quality of written discourse, in terms of the types and variety of grammatical structures and the organization and cohesion of ideas.
- **Vocabulary usage** refers to a student's use of general, specific or technical language within a given context to communicate meaningfully.
- **Language forms and conventions** reflect the extent to which a student conveys meaning when producing original text, and the extent to which the written text is comprehensible. Aspects of language forms and conventions include grammar (syntax), word choice (semantics), and mechanics (spelling, punctuation and capitalization).

## WIDA Writing Rubric Scoring Protocol:

Follow the steps outlined below and use Document 1 and 2 (attached) to formatively assess the written language growth of your ELL students at least once per quarter.

### Step 1: Review WIDA Writing Rubric criteria and corresponding Glossary of Terms.

Writing Rubric of the WIDA™ Consortium™ Grades 1–12			Language Control
Level	Linguistic Complexity	Vocabulary Usage	
6 Reaching	A variety of sentence lengths and structures. Complexity in a single lightly subordinated paragraph or well-organized extended text. High cohesion and organization.	Consistent use of just the right word in just the right place. Precise, specific, or technical language in general.	Has reached comparability to that of English proficient peers functioning at the "proficient" level in state-wide assessments.
5 Bridging	A variety of sentence lengths and structures. Complexity in a single paragraph or a subordinated paragraph or a well-organized text.	Usage of technical language related to the content area. Some errors in spelling, punctuation, or mechanics.	Approaching comparability to that of English proficient peers, errors don't impede comprehensibility.
4 Expanding	A variety of sentence lengths and structures. Complexity emerging. Cohesion used to present main and detail.	Usage of specific and some technical language related to the content area. Lack of needed vocabulary may be noticeable.	Generally comprehensible at all times, errors don't impede the overall meaning, but errors may impede language inferences.
3 Developing	Simple and expanded sentences that show emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general and some technical language related to the content area. Lack of needed vocabulary may be noticeable.	Generally comprehensible when writing is somewhat complex and/or "off" from the original text or "off" from the original text.
2 Beginning	Simple words, but phrases or chunks of simple language. Emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general language related to the content area. Lack of needed vocabulary may be noticeable.	Generally comprehensible when text is copied or dictated from models or source text or when text is dictated or copied from models or source text. Comprehensibility may be significantly impeded in original text.
1 Entering	Single words, but phrases or chunks of simple language. Emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general language related to the content area. Lack of needed vocabulary may be noticeable.	Generally comprehensible when text is copied or dictated from models or source text or when text is dictated or copied from models or source text. Comprehensibility may be significantly impeded in original text.

### Step 2: Read the student work sample and determine an initial holistic score based on your overall impression of the paper.

Writing Rubric of the WIDA™ Consortium™ Grades 1–12		
Level	Linguistic Complexity	Vocabulary Usage
6 Reaching	A variety of sentence lengths and structures. Complexity in a single lightly subordinated paragraph or well-organized extended text. High cohesion and organization.	Consistent use of just the right word in just the right place. Precise, specific, or technical language in general.
5 Bridging	A variety of sentence lengths and structures. Complexity in a single paragraph or a subordinated paragraph or a well-organized text.	Usage of technical language related to the content area. Some errors in spelling, punctuation, or mechanics.
4 Expanding	A variety of sentence lengths and structures. Complexity emerging. Cohesion used to present main and detail.	Usage of specific and some technical language related to the content area. Lack of needed vocabulary may be noticeable.
3 Developing	Simple and expanded sentences that show emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general and some technical language related to the content area. Lack of needed vocabulary may be noticeable.
2 Beginning	Simple words, but phrases or chunks of simple language. Emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general language related to the content area. Lack of needed vocabulary may be noticeable.
1 Entering	Single words, but phrases or chunks of simple language. Emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general language related to the content area. Lack of needed vocabulary may be noticeable.

**Step 3:** Assign a score in each category (Linguistic Complexity, Vocabulary Usage and Language Forms and Conventions) in order to identify which of the following are areas of strength or areas for improvement:

1. Begin with the level you assigned as an overall score.
2. If the writing sample meets the expectations at that level for a particular category, then move up to the next level on the rubric.
3. If it meets that level of expectations, assign it that score for that individual category. If it doesn't meet that level, assign it the level you started with.
4. If the writing sample does not meet the expectations at that level for a particular category, then move down to the next level on the rubric.

\*Scores should only vary by one point to reflect a strength or weakness.

Writing Rubric of the WIDA™ Consortium® Grades 1–12			
Level	Linguistic Complexity	Vocabulary Usage	Language Control
6 Reaching	A variety of sentence lengths of varying Linguistic Complexity in a single organized paragraph or in extended text, cohesion and organization.	Consistent use of just the right word in just the right place. Precise Vocabulary Usage in general, specific, or technical language.	Has reached comparability to that of English-proficient peers functioning at the "proficient" level in state-wide assessments.
5 Bridging	A variety of sentence lengths of varying Linguistic Complexity in a single organized paragraph or in extended text, cohesion and organization.	Usage of technical language related to the content area, evident fluently with needed vocabulary.	Approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers; errors don't impede comprehensibility.
4 Expanding	A variety of sentence lengths of varying Linguistic Complexity; emerging cohesion used to provide detail and clarity.	Usage of specific and some technical language related to the content area; lack of needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident.	Generally comprehensible at all times, errors don't impede the overall meaning; both errors may reflect first language interference.
3 Developing	Simple and expanded sentences that show emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general and some specific language related to the content area; lack of needed vocabulary may be evident.	Generally comprehensible when writing in sentences; comprehensibility may from time to time be impeded by errors when attempting to produce more complex text.
2 Beginning	Phrases and short sentences; varying amounts of text may be copied or adapted; some amount of organization may be evident.	Usage of general language related to the content area; lack of needed vocabulary may be evident.	Generally comprehensible when text is copied or adapted from model or source text; comprehensibility may be significantly impeded in original text.
1 Entering	Single words, set phrases, or chunks of simple language; varying amounts of text may be copied or adapted; original text contains original language.	Usage of highest frequency vocabulary from school setting and content areas.	Generally comprehensible when text is copied or adapted from model or source text; comprehensibility may be significantly impeded in original text.

Writing Rubric of the WIDA™ Consortium® Grades 1–12			
Level	Linguistic Complexity	Vocabulary Usage	Language Control
6 Reaching	A variety of sentence lengths of varying Linguistic Complexity in a single organized paragraph or in extended text, cohesion and organization.	Consistent use of just the right word in just the right place. Precise Vocabulary Usage in general, specific, or technical language.	Has reached comparability to that of English-proficient peers functioning at the "proficient" level in state-wide assessments.
5 Bridging	A variety of sentence lengths of varying Linguistic Complexity in a single organized paragraph or in extended text, cohesion and organization.	Usage of technical language related to the content area, evident fluently with needed vocabulary.	Approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers; errors don't impede comprehensibility.
4 Expanding	A variety of sentence lengths of varying Linguistic Complexity; emerging cohesion used to provide detail and clarity.	Usage of specific and some technical language related to the content area; lack of needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident.	Generally comprehensible at all times, errors don't impede the overall meaning; both errors may reflect first language interference.
3 Developing	Simple and expanded sentences that show emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general and some specific language related to the content area; lack of needed vocabulary may be evident.	Generally comprehensible when writing in sentences; comprehensibility may from time to time be impeded by errors when attempting to produce more complex text.
2 Beginning	Phrases and short sentences; varying amounts of text may be copied or adapted; some amount of organization may be evident.	Usage of general language related to the content area; lack of needed vocabulary may be evident.	Generally comprehensible when text is copied or adapted from model or source text; comprehensibility may be significantly impeded in original text.
1 Entering	Single words, set phrases, or chunks of simple language; varying amounts of text may be copied or adapted; original text contains original language.	Usage of highest frequency vocabulary from school setting and content areas.	Generally comprehensible when text is copied or adapted from model or source text; comprehensibility may be significantly impeded in original text.

**Step 4:** Record your holistic score and the scores for the individual categories in the first column of the chart. Also, record areas of strength or areas of weakness at the bottom of the chart.

\*It can be helpful to briefly note the rationale for each score by referencing the specific language in the WIDA Writing Rubric.

Student: _____ Date: _____	
Writing Sample: _____	
INDEPENDENT SCORING	SCORING AFTER CONSENSUS
Overall Score	
Linguistic Complexity	
Rationale:	
Vocabulary Usage	
Rationale:	
Language Control	
Rationale:	
Areas of Strength:	Areas for Improvement:

**\*Step 5:** If you have a colleague to compare with... Discuss your rationale for the scores assigned in each category. Come to consensus by giving specific examples from your rationale. Record your final scores in the right column.

\*Ideal but not mandatory

Student: _____ Date: _____	
Writing Sample: _____	
INDEPENDENT SCORING	SCORING AFTER CONSENSUS
Overall Score	
Linguistic Complexity	
Rationale:	
Vocabulary Usage	
Rationale:	
Language Control	
Rationale:	
Areas of Strength:	Areas for Improvement:

**Document 1: WIDA Writing Rubric:**

<b>Writing Rubric of the WIDA™ Consortium* Grades 1-12</b>			
<b>Level</b>	<b>Linguistic Complexity</b>	<b>Vocabulary Usage</b>	<b>Language Forms and Conventions</b>
<b>6</b> <b>Reaching*</b>	A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in a single tightly organized paragraph or in well-organized extended text; tight cohesion and organization	Consistent use of just the right word in just the right place; precise Vocabulary Usage in general, specific or technical language.	Has reached comparability to that of English proficient peers functioning at the “proficient” level in state-wide assessment.
<b>5</b> <b>Bridging</b>	A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in a single organized paragraph or in extended text; cohesion and organization	Usage of technical language related to the content area; evident facility with needed vocabulary;	Approaching comparability to that of English proficient peers; errors don’t impede comprehensibility.
<b>4</b> <b>Expanding</b>	A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; emerging cohesion used to provide detail and clarity.	Usage of specific and some technical language related to the content area; lack of needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident.	Generally comprehensible at all times, errors don’t impede the overall meaning; such errors may reflect first language interference.
<b>3</b> <b>Developing</b>	Simple and expanded sentences that show emerging complexity used to provide detail.	Usage of general and some specific language related to the content area; lack of needed vocabulary may be evident.	Generally comprehensible when writing in sentences; comprehensibility may from time to time be impeded by errors when attempting to produce more complex text.
<b>2</b> <b>Emerging</b>	Phrases and short sentences; varying amount of text may be copied or adapted; some attempt at organization may be evidenced.	Usage of general language related to the content area; lack of vocabulary may be evident	Generally comprehensible when text is adapted from model or source text, or when original text is limited to simple text; comprehensibility may be often impeded by errors.
<b>1</b> <b>Entering</b>	Single words, set phrases or chunks of simple language; varying amounts of text may be copied or adapted; adapted text contains original language.	Usage of highest frequency vocabulary from school setting and content areas.	Generally comprehensible when text is copied or adapted from model or source text; comprehensibility may be significantly impeded in original text.

Adapted from ACCESS for ELLs® Training Toolkit and Test Administration Manuals, Series 103 (2007-08)

**Document 2: WIDA Writing Rubric Consensus Scoring Chart:**

	<b>INDEPENDENT SCORING</b>	<b>SCORING AFTER CONSENSUS</b>
Overall Score		
<b>Linguistic Complexity</b>		
Rationale:		
<b>Vocabulary Usage</b>		
Rationale:		
<b>Language Forms and Conventions</b>		
Rationale:		
<b>Areas of Strength:</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement:</b>	

## WIDA Speaking Rubric Scoring Protocol:

Follow the steps outlined below and use Document 3 and 4 (attached) to formatively assess the oral language growth of your ELL students at least once per quarter.

### Step 1: Review WIDA Speaking Rubric criteria.

Task Level	Linguistic Complexity	Vocabulary Usage	Language Forms and Conventions
3	A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; includes a minimum of 10 words; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	Technical language related to the content area; fully with needed vocabulary to conduct	Appropriately comprehensible to that of English and other peers in terms of comprehensibility and fluency; includes the use of English and other peers in terms of fluency.
4	A variety of oral sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	Specific and some technical language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Of all those generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
5	Simple and expanded oral sentences; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	General and some specific language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Other communication in sentences, is generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
6	Fluently, brief and sentences.	General language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Other using simple discourse, is generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
7	Single words, all phrases or details of conversational language.	Higher frequency vocabulary from about setting and content area.	Other using minimal language, is generally comprehensible; communication may be significantly impacted when going beyond high level.

### Step 2: Record or transcribe a student as they are speaking (can be formal or informal). Listen or reread what the student said and assign a holistic score.

Task Level	Linguistic Complexity	Vocabulary Usage	Language Forms and Conventions
3	A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; includes a minimum of 10 words; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	Technical language related to the content area; fully with needed vocabulary to conduct	Appropriately comprehensible to that of English and other peers in terms of comprehensibility and fluency; includes the use of English and other peers in terms of fluency.
4	A variety of oral sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	Specific and some technical language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Of all those generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
5	Simple and expanded oral sentences; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	General and some specific language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Other communication in sentences, is generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
6	Fluently, brief and sentences.	General language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Other using simple discourse, is generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
7	Single words, all phrases or details of conversational language.	Higher frequency vocabulary from about setting and content area.	Other using minimal language, is generally comprehensible; communication may be significantly impacted when going beyond high level.

### Step 3: Assign a score in each category (Linguistic Complexity, Vocabulary Usage and Language Forms and Conventions) in order to identify which of the following are areas of strength or areas for improvement:

1. Begin with the level you assigned as an overall score.
2. If the speaking sample meets the expectations at that level for a particular category, then move up to the next level on the rubric.
3. If it meets that level of expectations, assign it that score for that individual category. If it doesn't meet that level, assign it the level you started with.
4. If the speaking sample does not meet the expectations at that level for a particular category, then move down to the next level on the rubric.

\*Scores should only vary by one point to reflect a strength or weakness.

Task Level	Linguistic Complexity	Vocabulary Usage	Language Forms and Conventions
3	A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; includes a minimum of 10 words; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	Technical language related to the content area; fully with needed vocabulary to conduct	Appropriately comprehensible to that of English and other peers in terms of comprehensibility and fluency; includes the use of English and other peers in terms of fluency.
4	A variety of oral sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	Specific and some technical language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Of all those generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
5	Simple and expanded oral sentences; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	General and some specific language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Other communication in sentences, is generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
6	Fluently, brief and sentences.	General language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Other using simple discourse, is generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
7	Single words, all phrases or details of conversational language.	Higher frequency vocabulary from about setting and content area.	Other using minimal language, is generally comprehensible; communication may be significantly impacted when going beyond high level.

Task Level	Linguistic Complexity	Vocabulary Usage	Language Forms and Conventions
3	A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; includes a minimum of 10 words; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	Technical language related to the content area; fully with needed vocabulary to conduct	Appropriately comprehensible to that of English and other peers in terms of comprehensibility and fluency; includes the use of English and other peers in terms of fluency.
4	A variety of oral sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	Specific and some technical language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Of all those generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
5	Simple and expanded oral sentences; includes the use of adjectives and adverbs; includes the use of prepositions and conjunctions; includes the use of pronouns and demonstratives.	General and some specific language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Other communication in sentences, is generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
6	Fluently, brief and sentences.	General language related to the content area; going for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	Other using simple discourse, is generally comprehensible and fluent; though phonological errors are apparent; though the overall meaning of the communication may appear to be clear; and some may reflect language interference.
7	Single words, all phrases or details of conversational language.	Higher frequency vocabulary from about setting and content area.	Other using minimal language, is generally comprehensible; communication may be significantly impacted when going beyond high level.

**Step 4:** Record your holistic score and the scores for the individual categories in the first column of the chart. Also, record areas of strength or areas of weakness at the bottom of the chart.

*\*It can be helpful to briefly note the rationale for each score by referencing the specific language in the WIDA Speaking Rubric.*

Student \_\_\_\_\_  
 Writing Sample \_\_\_\_\_

	INDEPENDENT SCORING	SCORING AFTER CONSENSUS
Overall Score		
Linguistic Complexity		
Rationale:		
Vocabulary Usage		
Rationale:		
Language Control		
Rationale:		
Areas of Strength:	Areas for Improvement:	

**\*Step 5:** If you have a colleague to compare with... Discuss your rationale for the scores assigned in each category. Come to consensus by giving specific examples from your rationale. Record your final scores in the right column.

*\*Ideal but not mandatory*

Student \_\_\_\_\_  
 Writing Sample \_\_\_\_\_

	INDEPENDENT SCORING	SCORING AFTER CONSENSUS
Overall Score		
Linguistic Complexity		
Rationale:		
Vocabulary Usage		
Rationale:		
Language Control		
Rationale:		
Areas of Strength:	Areas for Improvement:	

**Document 3: WIDA Speaking Rubric**

<b>Speaking Rubric of the WIDA™ Consortium* Grades 1-12</b>			
<b>Task Level</b>	<b>Linguistic Complexity</b>	<b>Vocabulary Usage</b>	<b>Language Forms and Conventions</b>
<b>5 Bridging</b>	A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral discourse; responses show cohesion and organization used to support main ideas	Technical language related to the content area; facility with needed vocabulary is evident	Approaching comparability to that of English proficient peers in terms of comprehensibility and fluency; errors don't impede communication and may be typical of those an English proficient peer might make
<b>4 Expanding</b>	A variety of oral sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity; responses show emerging cohesion used to provide detail and clarity	Specific and some technical language related to the content area; groping for needed vocabulary may be occasionally evident	At all times generally comprehensible and fluent, though phonological syntactic or semantic errors that don't impede the overall meaning of the communication may appear at times; such errors may reflect first language interference
<b>3 Developing</b>	Simple and expanded oral sentences show emerging complexity; responses show emerging cohesion used to provide detail and clarity	General and some specific language related to the content area; may grope for needed vocabulary at times	When communicating in sentences, is generally comprehensible and fluent; communication may from time to time be impeded by groping for language structures or by phonological, syntactic or semantic errors, especially when attempting more complex oral discourse.
<b>2 Emerging</b>	Phrases, short oral sentences	General language related to the content area; groping for vocabulary when going beyond the highly familiar is evident	When using simple discourse, is generally comprehensible and fluent; communication may be impeded by groping for language structures or phonological, syntactic or semantic errors when going beyond phrases and short, simple sentences

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Entering</b></p>	<p>Single words, set phrases or chunks of memorized oral language</p>	<p>Highest frequency vocabulary from school setting and content areas</p>	<p>When using memorized language, is generally comprehensible; communication may be significantly impeded when going beyond the highly familiar</p>
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Adapted from ACCESS for ELLs® Training Toolkit and Test Administration Manuals, Series 103 (2007-08)

\*English proficiency level 6 is not included in the Speaking Rubric as it is reserved for students whose oral English is comparable to that of their English-proficient peers.



**Document 4: WIDA Speaking Rubric Consensus Scoring Chart**

	<b>INDEPENDENT SCORING</b>	<b>SCORING AFTER CONSENSUS</b>
Overall Score		
<b>Linguistic Complexity</b>		
Rationale:		
<b>Vocabulary Usage</b>		
Rationale:		
<b>Language Forms and Conventions</b>		
Rationale:		
<b>Areas of Strength:</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement:</b>	