



## Using WIDA MODEL as an Interim Assessment with ACCESS for ELLs

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# Introduction

Interim assessments can provide educators with additional information to tailor their instruction, gauge student growth, and predict future performance on summative assessments. When considering using an interim assessment, there are seven critical categories to keep in mind. These criteria are listed below with an explanation of how WIDA MODEL covers them in relation to their use as an interim assessment with ACCESS for ELLs. Lastly, please note that from this point forward—with few exemptions—this document will only refer to each assessment as MODEL or ACCESS.

## Theoretical Foundation

In common with all WIDA assessments, MODEL reflects the WIDA Can Do Philosophy in that it is designed to allow students to show what they *can do* with language. Supporting this position is the WIDA understanding of the arc of development—as students mature both cognitively and in their language proficiency.

The following excerpt from *WIDA MODEL Online Test Administration Manual* (WIDA, 2015-2018) describes in detail the theoretical foundation of MODEL. Note that it applies equally to both the online and paper versions of MODEL.

MODEL Online is an adaptive test that assesses students' English language proficiency in the areas of the five WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards:

- Social and Instructional Language (SIL),
- Language of English Language Arts (LoLA),
- Language of Mathematics (LoMA),
- Language of Science (LoSC), and
- Language of Social Studies (LoSS).

Within the WIDA Standards Framework for instruction and assessment for ELLs lies the ELD Standards for kindergarten through grade 12. The ELD Standards divide the continuum of language development into six proficiency levels. The levels, in order from lowest to highest, are as follows:

- Level 1: Entering
- Level 2: Emerging
- Level 3: Developing
- Level 4: Expanding
- Level 5: Bridging
- Level 6: Reaching

These language proficiency levels define the expected performance and describe what ELLs can reasonably be expected to do within each domain of the standards. As such, Level 6 (Reaching) is reserved for those students for whom the English language is no longer a barrier to accessing academic content appropriate to their grade level.

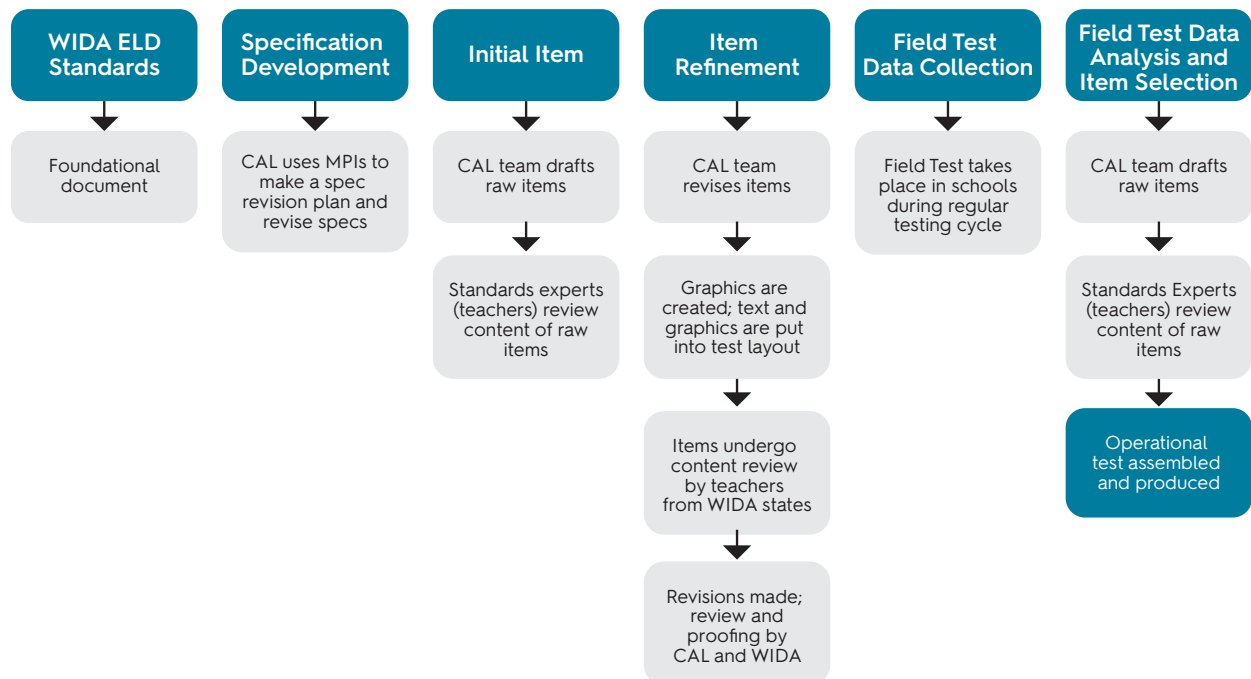
WIDA uses three criteria to describe and evaluate a student’s language. These criteria are reflected in the Performance Definitions, as well as in the WIDA Speaking and Writing Interpretive Rubrics (WIDA, 2020a; WIDA, 2020b). These criteria describe aspects of an ELL’s increasing proficiency in academic English and include the following:

- Linguistic complexity—the amount and quality of speech or writing for a given situation;
- Vocabulary usage—the specificity of words or phrases for a given context; and
- Language control—the comprehensibility of the communication based on the amount and type of errors.

## Content Validity

MODEL is grounded in the same WIDA English Language Development Standards that underlie ACCESS. The test covers all six levels of proficiency in all four domains for students from grades 1-12. Items for MODEL were either adapted from ACCESS, or written to similar specifications as ACCESS items. As detailed in *Development and Field Test of WIDA MODEL: Grades 1-2 and 3-5* (WIDA, 2012) and *Development and Field Test of WIDA MODEL: Grades 6-8 and 9-12* (WIDA, 2014), educators were included in all phases of item development and review. All items went through a series of reviews before being field tested, including a content review, an international perspectives review, and a bias and sensitivity review. Figure 1 shows in detail the item and test development process followed for all WIDA tests.

**Figure 1: Item and Test Development Process**



# Technical Quality

The reliability of MODEL depends on the path taken through the test. The following tables show the reliability of the Overall score for each cluster by path, using stratified alpha to calculate composite reliability. For example, the reliability for the Grade 1-2 test when the student places low in both Listening and Reading is 0.80. Generally speaking, a reliability of 0.80 or higher indicates that a test is reliable and provides evidence of the technical quality of MODEL. (For more information, see WIDA, 2012, and WIDA, 2014.)

**Table 1: Overall Reliability Grades 1-2**

Speaking	Listening Placement Level	Reading Placement Level	Writing	Stratified Alpha
-	Low	Low	-	0.80
	Low	Mid		0.81
	Low	High		0.82
	Medium	Low		0.81
	Medium	Mid		0.82
	Medium	High		0.82
	High	Low		0.81
	High	Mid		0.82
	High	High		0.82

**Table 2: Overall Reliability Grades 3-5**

Speaking	Listening Placement Level	Reading Placement Level	Writing	Stratified Alpha
-	Low	Low	-	0.88
	Low	Mid		0.88
	Low	High		0.89
	Medium	Low		0.88
	Medium	Mid		0.88
	Medium	High		0.89
	High	Low		0.88
	High	Mid		0.88
	High	High		0.89

**Table 3: Overall Reliability Grades 6-8**

Speaking	Listening Placement Level	Reading Placement Level	Writing	Stratified Alpha
-	Low	Low	-	.85
	Low	Mid		.86
	Low	High		.91
	Medium	Low		.86
	Medium	Mid		.87
	Medium	High		.93
	High	Low		.88
	High	Mid		.89
	High	High		.94

**Table 4: Overall Reliability Grades 9-12**

Speaking	Listening Placement Level	Reading Placement Level	Writing	Stratified Alpha
-	Low	Low	-	.89
	Low	Mid		.91
	Low	High		.93
	Medium	Low		.90
	Medium	Mid		.91
	Medium	High		.93
	High	Low		.91
	High	Mid		.92
	High	High		.94

# Score Reports and Score Interpretations

MODEL reports seven scores:

- Four language domain scores: Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing
- Three composite scores: Oral Language, Literacy, and Overall Score

For grades 1-12, both online and paper-based, the MODEL reports both the scale scores and proficiency level scores. MODEL for Kindergarten only reports the proficiency level scores.

**Scale scores** precisely track student growth over time and across grades. Because scale scores take into account differences in item difficulty, they place all students on a single continuum that stretches from kindergarten through grade 12. For example, using scale scores, you can track how much a student's reading ability increases from grade 6 to grade 7 or you might compare the writing skills of students in grade 2 to that of students in grade 5. Scale scores are reported on a scale from 100 to 600.

**Proficiency levels** are interpretive scores. In other words, they are based on, but separate from, scale scores. Proficiency level scores help educators and students understand what their scale scores mean in terms of what students *can do* with the language. Proficiency levels scores are reported on a scale from one to six, based on the performance definitions in the WIDA English Language Development Standards. The WIDA Can Do Descriptors are another popular resource with educators since it helps interpret what MODEL scores mean for students. These scores can be used to target language instruction in specific areas to better support language development.

In summary, scale scores provide nuanced information on students' language development that can be used to monitor growth. Proficiency levels scores are easy for educators and students to understand and are useful for informing instruction.

WIDA composite scores are calculated using one or more of the domain scores. They are calculated the same way as the scores for ACCESS:

**Table 5: MODEL Composite Scores**

Type of Composite Score	Contribution of Language Domains (by percent)			
	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Oral Language	50%	50%	-	-
Literacy	-	-	50%	50%
Overall	15%	15%	35%	35%

Score reports are available as soon as the test is administered and scored. For MODEL Paper, a printable student score report is available immediately when student scores are entered into the online score calculator. For MODEL Online, three score reports are produced by the Test Administration Interface: 1) an Individual Score Report, which provides detailed score information for teachers and administrators; 2) a Parent/Guardian report; 3) a School Roster Report, which summarizes results for all students within a grade level in a school. Examples of the different reports can be found in the Appendix section at the end of this document.



In addition, the *WIDA MODEL Interpretive Guide for Score Reports Grades K-12* (WIDA, 2019) is available to help stakeholders understand the meaning of the scores.

## Practicality and Inclusivity

As explained above, all items developed for MODEL go through extensive reviews before field testing, including bias and content reviews. For more information, see WIDA (2012) and WIDA (2014).

The grade-cluster forms and adaptive nature of MODEL Online allows for testing of students in all grades and at all levels of proficiency. With the exception of the Speaking test, which is administered individually, all test forms can be administered individually or in a group. The Listening and Reading tests are scored automatically, while Speaking and Writing are scored locally. A score report can be generated automatically once all scores are entered into the online score calculator.

Information on suggested accommodations can be found in Appendix E of the *WIDA MODEL Test Administrator Manual* (WIDA, 2010) and Section 9 of the *Online Test Administrator Manual* (WIDA, 2015-2018).

## Relationship to Performance on the Summative Test (ACCESS)

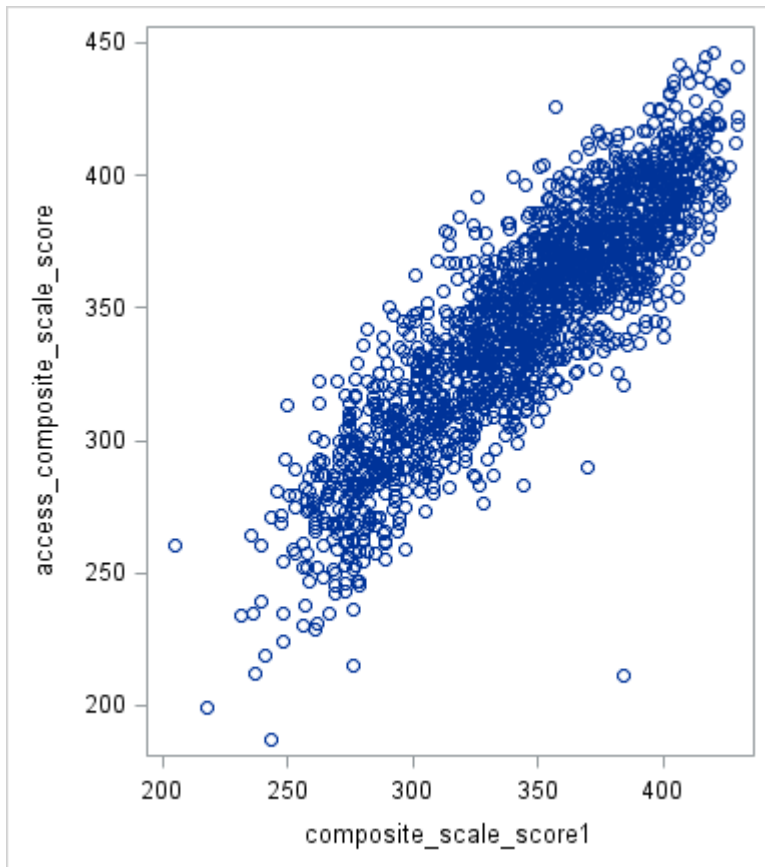
MODEL shares several key elements with ACCESS:

- Both are based on the same WIDA English Language Development Standards
- Both are scored on the same underlying scale
- Both are developed using similar item and test specifications
- Similar processes are followed in developing items for both tests

WIDA conducted a predictive study between MODEL and ACCESS to understand the relationship between the two tests. The study suggested that results on MODEL are strong predictors for results on ACCESS when controlling for grade level and time between test administrations (see Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2019). Specifically, the key findings of the study were:

- There is a clear positive relationship between Overall scores on the MODEL and ACCESS ( $R= 0.88$ ), with a narrow dispersion of scores in the plot (Figure 2).
- The multiple regression analysis shows that the number of days between test administrations and the MODEL Overall composite scale score have significant positive parameter estimates, indicating that higher scores on MODEL Overall and longer times between test administrations are associated with higher scores on ACCESS Overall.

Figure 2: Relationship Between Overall Scores on MODEL and ACCESS



In conjunction with the similarities in test design, these results offer strong support for the use of MODEL as an interim assessment for schools that use ACCESS.

# Consequential Validity

Here is what users are saying about MODEL:

*“The WIDA MODEL Assessment has better allowed us as a district to determine how schools are performing with their English Language Development Program. We are able to, on an ongoing basis, make decisions about how language programming is delivered across grade levels and schools in real time. We are also able to communicate with families about their children’s language development several times a year. Content, ESOL teachers, and administrators are able to use real-time language data to determine individual student’s language proficiency and use the data to triangulate it with content data to make sound instructional decisions based on individual student strengths.”*

ESOL Supervisor, Maryland

*“[WIDA MODEL] has been a great way to familiarize the students with what is expected of them for ACCESS and to empower them to talk about their progress as well as their language proficiency goals.”*

English Learner Strategist, Nevada

*“WIDA MODEL results pinpoint where students are currently functioning in the language domains and allow the teachers to implement strategies to address those areas during ESL instruction and core content instruction.”*

Elementary Education Supervisor, Tennessee

*“I started using MODEL last school year because I was looking for a way to help my students progress [and to] monitor their language growth throughout the year.”*

English Learner Strategist, Nevada

*“We use MODEL because it allows us to have authentic conversations about the strengths of our students.”*

Director of English Learner Programs and Services, Virginia

## References

- WIDA. (2010). *WIDA MODEL test administration manual: Grades 1-2*. Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System.
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- WIDA. (2020b). *WIDA MODEL writing rubric grades 1-12*. Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System.
- Wisconsin Center for Education Research. (2019). *WIDA MODEL and ACCESS for ELLs: Examining the relationship between student scores on two assessments* (WIDA Technical Report No. TR-2019-4). Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System.

# Appendices

## Appendix A – MODEL Individual Student Report



**WIDA**<sup>™</sup>

English Language Proficiency Test  
WIDA MODEL Gr. 1-2 Summative with Writing Task 3

### Individual Student Report

<b>Student:</b> Assignment, Alt	<b>School:</b> Ann
<b>Test Date:</b> 1/29/2020	<b>Student ID:</b>
<b>Grade:</b> 1	<b>Birth Date:</b>

**Report Purpose:** This report will provide information about the student’s level of English proficiency (ability to listen, speak, read, and write), both in social and academic language. **Social language** is English use in everyday communication. **Academic language** is English use in association with the following subject areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies (Social Sciences). Please refer to the MODEL Interpretive Guide for Score Reports for more detailed information on the scores and score interpretation.

**MODEL results by language domain and composite scores:**

Language Domain	Scale Score (Possible 100-600)	Proficiency Level (Possible 1.0-6.0)
Listening	0	0.0
Speaking	173	1.0
Writing	333	4.9
Reading	0	0.0
Oral Language <sup>A</sup>	86	1.0
Literacy <sup>B</sup>	166	1.0
Overall Score <sup>C</sup>	141	1.0

A - Oral Language = 50% Listening + 50% Speaking

C - Overall Score = 30% Oral Language + 70% Literacy

B - Literacy = 50% Writing + 50% Reading

Overall Scores are computed when all 4 domains have been completed

NA - Not Attempted - Student did not complete the test for the specified domain

Description of Proficiency Levels	
<b>1</b>	<b>Entering</b> - Knows and uses minimal social language and minimal academic language with visual and graphic support
<b>2</b>	<b>Emerging</b> - Knows and uses some social English and general academic language with visual and graphic support
<b>3</b>	<b>Developing</b> - Knows and uses social English and some specific academic language with visual and graphic support
<b>4</b>	<b>Expanding</b> - Knows and uses social English and some technical academic language
<b>5</b>	<b>Bridging</b> - Knows and uses social English and academic language working with grade-level material
<b>6</b>	<b>Reaching</b> - Knows and uses social and academic language at the highest level measured by this test

6/4/2020

## Appendix B – MODEL Parent/Guardian Report



English Language Proficiency Test  
WIDA MODEL™ Gr. 1-2 Summative

### Parent/Guardian Report

<b>Student:</b> Assignment, Alt	<b>School:</b> Ann
<b>Test Date:</b> 1/29/2020	<b>Student ID:</b>
<b>Grade:</b> 1	<b>Birth Date:</b>

**Purpose of Report:** This report will provide information about your daughter’s/son’s level of English proficiency (ability to listen, speak, read, and write), both in social and academic language. **Social language** is English use in everyday communication. **Academic language** is English use in association with the following subject areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies (Social Sciences).

#### Student’s English Language Proficiency Level

Test Section	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 Reaching
Listening						
Speaking						
Writing						
Reading						
Oral Language <sup>A</sup> (Listening and Speaking)						
Literacy <sup>B</sup> (Writing and Reading)						
Overall Score <sup>C</sup> (Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading)						

#### What are English Language Proficiency Levels?

Proficiency levels describe a student’s ability to use (speak and write) and process (read and listen) social and academic English in terms of the six WIDA English language proficiency levels (*1-Entering, 2-Emerging, 3-Developing, 4-Expanding, 5-Bridging, and 6-Reaching*). These levels can be viewed as a continuum of English language development. For instance, a student who is new to the English language (or a beginner) may have scores in Level 1 or Level 2, whereas a student with more proficiency in English may have scores ranging from Level 4 to Level 6.

<b>Other Information</b>	<b>Test Section Is Blank</b> - the Student was absent for this Section of the test
	A - Oral Language = 50% Listening + 50% Speaking - will be blank if student was absent for one or both of the Sections
	B - Literacy = 50% Writing + 50% Reading - will be blank if student was absent for one or both of the Sections
	C - Overall Score = 30% Oral Language + 70% Literacy - will be blank if student was absent for one or more of the Sections

6/4/2020

# Appendix C – MODEL Grade Level Roster Report



English Language Proficiency Test  
WIDA MODEL™ Gr. 3-5 Summative

Test Administrator(s):  
School: Ann  
Grade: 4

## Grade Level Roster Report

STUDENT NAME STUDENT ID	Test Form	Test Date	Listening		Speaking		Writing		Reading		Oral Language <sup>A</sup>		Literacy <sup>B</sup>		Overall Score <sup>C</sup>	
			Scale Score	Prof Score	Scale Score	Prof Score	Scale Score	Prof Score	Scale Score	Prof Score	Scale Score	Prof Score	Scale Score	Prof Score	Scale Score	Prof Score
Assignment 2, Alt	3-5 Summ. WT10LD	11/29/2020	0	0.0	176	1.0	364	4.8	0	0.0	88	1.0	182	1.0	153	1.0
High_35Mac	3-5 Summ. WT10LD	10/11/2019	286	2.5	0	0.0	394	6.0	340	4.6	143	1.0	367	5.5	298	2.5

A - Oral Language = 50% Listening + 50% Speaking  
C - Overall Score = 30% Oral Language + 70% Literacy  
NA - Not Attempted = Student did not complete the test for the specified domain

B - Literacy = 50% Writing + 50% Reading  
Overall Scores are computed when all 4 domains have been completed

6/11/2020



# Technical Report

No. TR-2020-2  
October 2020

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