WIDA™

Can Do Descriptors
KEY USES EDITION

Kindergarten

The WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grades K–12

The Can Do Descriptors provide examples of what language learners **can do** at various stages of English language development in listening, speaking, reading and writing. The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* are one component of the WIDA Standards Framework (shown at right). The Framework, as a whole, supports the implementation of the WIDA Language Development Standards in the instruction and assessment of language learners. We encourage educators to use the *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* in conjunction with the other components of the Framework, along with the previous edition of the Can Do Descriptors. For more information on the WIDA Standards Framework, visit www.wida.us.

The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* provide examples of academic language use for four specific communicative purposes. These purposes, referred to as **Key Uses,** were identified based on reviews of literature and a language analysis of college and career readiness standards:

Recount: To display knowledge or narrate experiences or events. Example tasks that include the Key Use of **Recount** include telling or summarizing stories, producing information reports, and sharing past experiences.

Explain: To clarify the "why" or the "how" of ideas, actions, or phenomena. Example tasks that include the Key Use of **Explain** include describing life cycles, sharing why or how things work, stating causes and effects, and sharing results of an experiment.

Argue: To persuade by making claims supported by evidence. Example tasks that include the Key Use of **Argue** include stating preferences or opinions and constructing arguments with evidence.

Discuss: To interact with others to build meaning and share knowledge. Example tasks that include the Key Use of **Discuss** include participating in small or large group activities and projects.

The Key Uses, as well as the example tasks, are not exhaustive, but are meant to help guide the planning and conversation around meaningful participation of language learners in standards-based content curriculum, instruction and assessment.

English Language Development Standards Framework
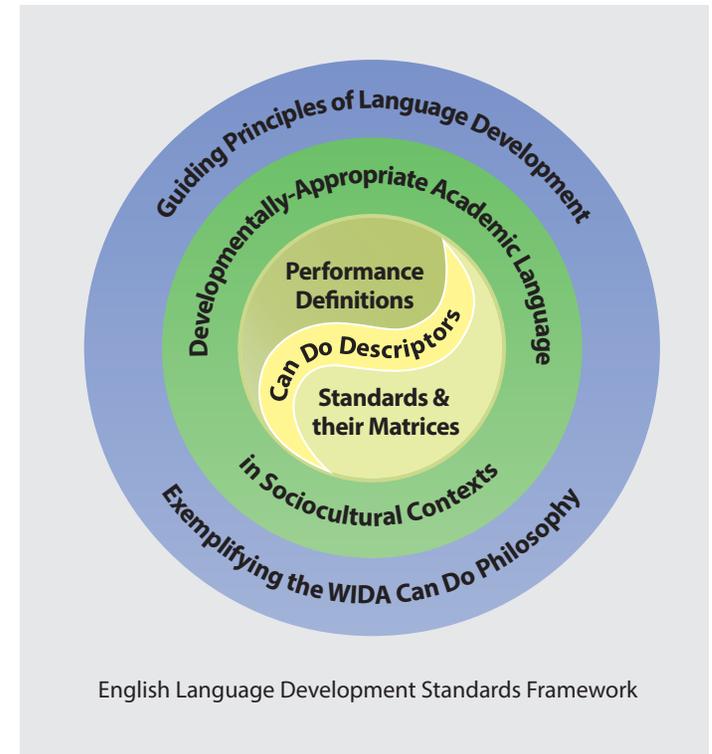
Organization of the WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grades K–12

The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* are organized by grade-level bands (K, 1, 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12) that correspond to those in ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. Within each grade-level band, the descriptors are organized by Key Use (Recount, Explain, Argue and Discuss) and within each Key Use, there are example descriptors across WIDA's six levels of language proficiency (ELP Levels 1–6).

The descriptors in Level 6 represent the language performance of students who have met all the criteria for Level 5. Unlike the descriptors at Levels 1–5 that provide examples of performance at the end of the level, the descriptors at Level 6 are examples of performance within the Level 6.

For three of the Key Uses (**Recount, Explain,** and **Argue**) you'll see descriptors for the four language domains (Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing). The descriptors for the Key Use **Discuss** are only shown for the domain of Oral Language. The Key Use **Discuss** highlights the importance of oral language development for the meaningful participation of all language learners at this grade level, regardless of their level of language proficiency. The descriptors in the Key Use **Discuss** provide examples of what students *can do* to participate in oral discussions.

Potential Uses for the Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition

Audiences	The WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition can help….
Educators who work with language learners, including coaches, teachers *(e.g., general education, gifted and talented, special education, Title I),* language specialists, and support staff.	• Interpret results from WIDA English language proficiency assessments *(e.g., ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, WIDA MODEL, and language screeners)* to inform classroom decisions • Differentiate curriculum, instruction, and assessments designed in English based on language learners' levels of English language proficiency • Collaborate and engage in instructional conversations about the academic success of language learners in English environments • Advocate for equitable access to content for language learners based on their level of language proficiency
Administrators and school leaders	• Interpret results from WIDA English language proficiency assessments *(e.g., ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, WIDA MODEL, and language screeners)* to inform decisions on educational programming for language learners • Communicate with other educators about students' English language development • Support the WIDA Can Do philosophy throughout schools and districts • Advocate for equitable access to content for language learners based on their level of language proficiency

Stakeholders are encouraged to use the Can Do Descriptors beyond the audiences and purposes identified above to advocate on behalf of language learners.

K

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency* English language learners can...

KEY USE OF RECOUNT

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	**Process recounts by** • Pointing to pictures described orally in context (e.g., "the big dog") • Finding familiar people, places, or objects named orally (e.g., "Where's a chair?")	**Process recounts by** • Responding with gestures to songs, chants, or stories modeled by teachers • Matching familiar pictures, objects, or movements to oral statements (e.g., "Clap your hands.")	**Process recounts by** • Acting out songs, chants, stories and poems with gestures as a whole group • Following sequential language for oral directions one step at a time (e.g., "Walk to the door. Now, come to the circle.")	**Process recounts by** • Role playing in response to illustrated stories read aloud • Matching extended oral descriptions of content-related topics to illustrations or graphics (e.g., "The bright yellow ball is shining in the sky.")	**Process recounts by** • Arranging content-related objects or illustrations according to oral discourse with a partner • Making patterns from real objects or pictures based on detailed oral descriptions from a model (e.g., "Follow me. Put two blue crayons on your table. Then put two red crayons. Now put two more crayons of another color.")	**Process recounts by** • Identifying drawings or other visual displays from elaborate descriptions with details • Identifying detailed information in oral discourse or through multimedia
SPEAKING	**Recount by** • Repeating words, simple phrases or expressions from familiar stories as a whole class • Participating in group songs, chants, or poems using gestures or physical movement	**Recount by** • Restating some language associated with illustrated short stories or informational text (e.g., "I see." "I hear.") • Re-enacting various roles when interacting in pairs or in small groups	**Recount by** • Retelling main events in short narrative stories using pictures to peers • Describing attributes of familiar objects, people, and places	**Recount by** • Retelling familiar stories through a series of pictures • Sharing personal stories or experiences with others (e.g., in multiple languages)	**Recount by** • Relating school-based content and personal experiences with peers and adults • Rephrasing events from stories or information with a partner (e.g., class rules or routines)	**Recount by** • Retelling familiar stories, including key details with prompting and support • Describing details about characters, settings, and major events in illustrated stories with prompting and support

*Except for level 6, for which there is no ceiling.

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KEY USE OF RECOUNT

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
READING	**Process recounts by** • Matching icons and symbols to corresponding pictures • Identifying labeled real-life classroom objects *(e.g., tables, books, door)*	**Process recounts by** • Reproducing content-related information in oral text through drawings • Acting out familiar rhymes from text read aloud or chanted in small groups	**Process recounts by** • Identifying familiar words in context *(e.g., in Big Books or wall charts)* in small groups • Recognizing persons and settings in illustrated text read aloud	**Process recounts by** • Identifying words in picture dictionaries *(e.g., in multiple languages)* • Recognizing common types of text *(e.g., storybooks, poems)* read aloud	**Process recounts by** • Ordering words to form short sentences from oral models *(e.g., using pocket charts, cards)* • Identifying language related to spatial relations *(e.g., in front of, next to, in between)*	**Process recounts by** • Identifying major events in stories with prompting and support • Identifying main ideas and details in common types of illustrated text *(e.g., trade books, rhymes)*
WRITING	**Recount by** • Dictating personal information scribed by adults *(e.g., on self and family members)* • Reproducing icons or environmental print related to self from models	**Recount by** • Reproducing symbols, numbers, and illustrated words from models in context • Drawing and labeling familiar people, objects, or events from models *(e.g., word walls, posters, cards)*	**Recount by** • Reproducing familiar words from labeled models or illustrations *(e.g., labeled dioramas)* • Restating facts about personal experiences shared with classmates *(e.g., through illustrated text)*	**Recount by** • Producing familiar words and phrases from environmental print and illustrated text • Drawing and describing different parts of stories, personal experiences, or events *(e.g., written conversations)* with a peer	**Recount by** • Describing everyday experiences using illustrated phrases and short sentences • Producing illustrated stories about self or family *(e.g., using one or more languages)*	**Recount by** • Stating information to answer modeled questions about experiences with guidance • Using new words and phrases acquired through conversations or oral reading in short illustrated sentences

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KEY USE OF EXPLAIN

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	**Process explanations by** • Identifying illustrated activities described orally • Following modeled actions to show likes or dislikes *(e.g., using "or" words and phrases, "read" or "write")*	**Process explanations by** • Matching real-life objects to illustrations about their use based on oral statements • Identifying people and places associated with everyday events described orally *(e.g., "It is Monday. You are at school.")*	**Process explanations by** • Identifying language associated with features of objects or print *(e.g., "Show me a word in the title.")* • Following peer-modeled oral commands with a partner	**Process explanations by** • Drawing individual phases or steps to "how" questions *(e.g., "How does a caterpillar change into a butterfly?")* • Pointing out illustrated details that match oral descriptions of cycles or procedures	**Process explanations by** • Identifying illustrations related to cause and effect from oral information • Reenacting procedural information obtained from videos or other media *(e.g., "Show me how to make day and night.")*	**Process explanations by** • Recognizing language related to scientific or mathematical processes • Identifying patterns in procedures or natural phenomena in illustrated stories read aloud
SPEAKING	**Explain by** • Identifying familiar objects used in everyday routines and activities with a partner *(e.g., in the home language and English)* • Rehearsing and acting out key steps in procedures or classroom routines following models *(e.g., "Put away toys. Get in line.")*	**Explain by** • Describing uses of everyday objects or roles of familiar people *(e.g., "Teacher reads.")* • Stating attributes and classifying objects into illustrated categories to show how they go together *(e.g., shapes, colors, sizes)*	**Explain by** • Comparing sizes of familiar phenomena *(e.g., bigger than/ smaller than, longer/ wider)* • Stating reasons for classroom routines or procedures with a partner *(e.g., expected behaviors)*	**Explain by** • Describing classroom routines *(e.g., putting away puzzles)* • Comparing and contrasting placement of real-life objects and phenomena at centers *(e.g., "on the table" v. "under the table")*	**Explain by** • Providing details related to classroom activities and tasks in small groups *(e.g., how we work together)* • Describing steps in familiar cycles and processes *(e.g., getting in a circle to play a game)*	**Explain by** • Comparing two objects using measurable attributes *(e.g., "The table is higher than the chair.")* • Describing the causes or effects of different phenomena based on observations and experiences *(e.g., pull/push, sink/float)*

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KEY USE OF EXPLAIN

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
READING	**Process explanations by** • Matching illustrations with modeled language with a partner • Identifying steps in procedures from illustrations and icons (e.g., "It goes up. It goes down.")	**Process explanations by** • Identifying illustrated words or icons to show why (e.g., in play-based activities) • Following illustrated directions with a peer (e.g., to form shapes or patterns)	**Process explanations by** • Pointing out causes or motives in illustrated stories read aloud • Showing relationships depicted in informational text with real-life objects (e.g., "5 is more than 3.")	**Process explanations by** • Demonstrating the relationship between objects, people, or animals from detailed descriptions read aloud using gestures (e.g., "the big tall giraffe and the teeny tiny mouse") • Classifying how to resolve situations faced by characters or in content-related text using graphic organizers	**Process explanations by** • Matching familiar descriptive phrases to objects or illustrations with a partner (e.g., steps in morning routines) • Comparing how to do something in different ways from illustrated stories (e.g., making fruit salad)	**Process explanations by** • Drawing sketches or models to show how to solve problems read from illustrated informational text • Locating descriptive language related to "how" or "why" in illustrated text in small groups
WRITING	**Explain by** • Describing familiar routines by drawing pictures and dictating to adults (e.g., in one or more languages) • Drawing what comes next (e.g., in stories or experiments)	**Explain by** • Connecting oral language to print (e.g., through language experience) • Reproducing labeled pictures or photographs to describe processes or procedures (e.g., producing an album)	**Explain by** • Describing familiar events or phenomena using sentence starters and drawings • Identifying self as an author through pictures and invented words (e.g., by keeping a journal)	**Explain by** • Describing how to do something through a sequence of pictures and words • Composing group drafts on different processes based on oral input or experiences modeled by teachers	**Explain by** • Describing uses of tools or objects with a peer (e.g., from illustrated phrase walls) • Sequencing content-related processes by drawing and describing objects (e.g., from seeds to plants)	**Explain by** • Stating steps of familiar routines or events by drawing, dictating, and writing • Responding to "how" questions and suggestions from peers, with guidance from adults, to add details to text

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	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	**Process arguments by** • Identifying personal choices *(e.g., "Show me your favorite…")* from different examples • Classifying everyday objects by descriptive features *(e.g., red ones, blue ones)*	**Process arguments by** • Discriminating between words and phrases related to personal choices *(e.g., "The park or the zoo?")* • Identifying oral preferences stated by others *(e.g., choosing pictures or objects)*	**Process arguments by** • Acting out opposites using gestures *(e.g., through songs or chants)* • Responding non-verbally to show agreement or disagreement with opinions of others *(e.g., thumbs up, thumbs down)*	**Process arguments by** • Drawing to make predictions from illustrated stories read aloud *(e.g., "What happens next?")* • Classifying fact from fiction in oral discourse *(e.g., through physical responses or sorting pictures)*	**Process arguments by** • Agreeing or disagreeing with oral claims using gestures *(e.g., "Tomorrow will be hotter than today.")* • Identifying reasons for choices in real life scenarios read aloud *(e.g., by circling pictures)*	**Process arguments by** • Interpreting which side to take and why from dialogs or short conversations • Identifying details of stories or scenarios read aloud that represent different points of view
SPEAKING	**Argues by** • Stating personal likes from oral prompts *(e.g., sports, food, animals)* • Naming choices from models *(e.g., "Apple or banana?")*	**Argues by** • Stating personal preferences *(e.g., "I like this.")* • Agreeing or disagreeing with familiar questions *(e.g., "Are you ready?" "Yes I am.")*	**Argues by** • Stating personal preferences or opinions *(e.g., "Recess is best.")* • Predicting everyday situations or events from illustrations	**Argues by** • Expressing likes, dislikes, or preferences with reasons *(e.g., "I like ____ because____.")* • Giving reasons for classifying familiar objects with classmates *(e.g., in open sorts)*	**Argues by** • Offering personal opinions about content-related ideas in small groups • Giving reasons for content-related information when modeled *(e.g., "These animals go together because they have spots.")*	**Argues by** • Agreeing or disagreeing with reasons for categorizing content-related information with a partner • Stating personal opinions with justification for content-related ideas or topics

KEY USE OF ARGUE

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KEY USE OF ARGUE

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
READING	**Process arguments by** • Pointing to labeled pictures or objects of personal preferences • Matching illustrations to words of personal interest as modeled	**Process arguments by** • Classifying labeled pictures of personal choices from stories according to different character traits • Making choices from illustrated descriptions read aloud and sharing with peers *(e.g., based on "or" phrases)*	**Process arguments by** • Predicting next steps, actions, or events in informational text and stories read aloud *(e.g., by pointing to pictures)* • Indicating agreement or disagreement with authors' points of view of text read aloud with a partner	**Process arguments by** • Interpreting pictures in informational text as true or false in small groups • Comparing choices of different characters in illustrated text read aloud *(e.g., using T charts)*	**Process arguments by** • Evaluating situations in picture books and matching them to related reasons for choices • Agreeing or disagreeing with actions of characters in illustrated text read aloud	**Process arguments by** • Identifying different points of view from illustrated text with prompting and support • Identifying similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic *(e.g., pasting or matching words found in both sources)*
WRITING	**Argues by** • Illustrating likes or dislikes from real-life objects or pictures • Drawing or making collages about personal interests or content-related topics in small groups	**Argues by** • Drawing and reproducing words about preferences *(e.g., from charts or posters)* • Stating personal choices from models *(e.g., labeling photos or drawings of self)*	**Argues by** • Agreeing or disagreeing with choices *(e.g., producing "yes" or "no")* from models • Completing text about personal opinions on different topics *(e.g., "I like ___.")*	**Argues by** • Producing statements about choices using different models as examples *(e.g., "I want to ____.")* • Building short sentences from personal preferences using pictures or photos with partners	**Argues by** • Making requests to indicate preferences *(e.g., "Can I have …?")* • Listing reasons for content-related choices with guidance and support *(e.g., "Why do you like number 5?")*	**Argues by** • Composing opinion pieces using content-related language with prompting and support • Making claims using content-related language about topics or books *(e.g., dictated to adults)*

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KEY USE OF DISCUSS

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
DOMAINS: ORAL LANGUAGE	**Discuss by** • Attending to the speaker to demonstrate understanding • Following routines, chants, and songs	**Discuss by** • Addressing others according to relationship *(e.g., student-student, student-teacher)* • Participating in exchanges between peers *(e.g., thumb buddies, turn and talk)*	**Discuss by** • Working together collaboratively *(e.g., taking turns, listening to others)* • Using language and body movement to include others in conversations	**Discuss by** • Proposing ideas to contribute to conversations • Asking questions to request clarification	**Discuss by** • Asking questions to extend the conversation • Demonstrating active listening to show respect to the speaker	**Discuss by** • Sustaining conversations on a topic • Building upon comments/ responses of others

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