

# Tier Placement Protocol for ACCESS for ELLs®



ACCESS for ELLs is divided into three tiers: A, B, and C. While the tiers overlap, each tier assesses a different range of language proficiency. Therefore, to ensure the best possible testing experience for each student and the most meaningful results, it is necessary to place each student into the tier that best matches his or her proficiency level.

The selection of a student’s tier is best made by his or her teachers, based on the information they have about the student’s language proficiency. Criteria may include the student’s progress in the classroom as well as test results from past administrations of ACCESS for ELLs, WIDA MODEL, and/or the W-APT.

It is important to note that students who take the Tier A assessment cannot score higher than a 4.0 proficiency level in the domains of Reading and Listening. Likewise, students who take the Tier B assessment cannot receive higher than 5.0 on Reading or Listening. For this reason, students who are nearing these proficiency levels should be assigned the next higher tier so that their ability to show progress in these domains is not limited.

Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 - Reaching
<p><b>TIER A</b> is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have arrived in the U.S. or entered school in the U.S. within this academic school year without previous instruction in English, OR</li> <li>• currently receive literacy instruction ONLY in their native language, OR</li> <li>• have recently tested at the lowest level of English language proficiency</li> </ul>			<p>Note: Tier A is appropriate for recently identified LEP students who are at a very beginning ELP level. For example, a student who responds in English using only one word responses should be administered the Tier A test for their grade cluster.</p>		
<p>Note: Tier B is appropriate for most LEP students. Even a beginning-low student on the spring 2011 IPT should be administered Tier B if that student received instruction in English for a full year.</p>	<p><b>TIER B</b> is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have social language proficiency and some, but not extensive, academic language proficiency in English, OR</li> <li>• have acquired some literacy in English though have not yet reached grade level literacy</li> </ul>				
<p>Note: Tier C is appropriate for LEP students who are thought to be on par with their non-ELL peers in English, i.e., students who are thought to be proficient.</p> <p>When in doubt, administer the higher level Tier</p>	<p><b>TIER C</b> is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are approaching grade level in literacy and academic language proficiency in the core content areas, OR</li> <li>• will likely meet the state’s exit criteria for support services by the end of the academic year</li> </ul>				