English Language Proficiency Screener Guidance

Contents

Purpose of this Document

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires standardized entrance and exit criteria for English Learners (ELs). In Louisiana, one component of the entrance criteria is a standardized screener, the *English Language Proficiency Screener* (ELPS). This document provides information about participation, components, administration, and scoring of the ELPS.

Purpose of the ELPS

The ELPS is a tool used to help determine if a student entering a Louisiana school system for the first time is an EL who requires supplementary support services to continue developing language proficiency in English. A student must **fail** to score proficient on the ELPS in order to be identified as an EL and receive an *EL Accommodations Checklist*. The ELPS assesses a student's performance in the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Students Taking the ELPS

The school should provide a Home Language Survey (HLS) to all parents as part of the registration process. If a language other than English is listed on the HLS or the student comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant, the student should be given the ELPS within 30 days of enrollment. The student's ELPS results determine student eligibility for EL services. A student who does not score proficient on the ELPS is identified as an EL until exiting the program. The school sends a notification letter to the parents/guardians of the student; parents/guardians have the right to refuse services. The school should contact any parents/guardians to discuss the purpose of the program and to remind them that the student is still an EL and will need to take the annual summative, *English Language Proficiency Test* (ELPT), until meeting the exit criteria.

The *English Learner (EL) Identification Flowchart* can help a school determine whether a student is an EL and provides the steps to take after a student is screened.

For further information regarding EL classification, reference the *EL Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)*.

Transfer Students

A student transferring from another Louisiana school system should not retake the ELPS if they have already done so. The District Test Coordinator (DTC) of the student's new school system needs to send the LASID to assessment@la.gov to have the student's scores transferred within the Test Information and Distribution Engine (TIDE).

A school system should administer the ELPS for any student transferring from out of state who has documentation of receiving EL services.

## Pre-K and Kindergarten Students

Pre-K students are not eligible for EL services until they enter Kindergarten. Pre-K screening usually takes place the spring and summer before an eligible student begins Kindergarten. The following table lists the screener to administer for an enrolling Kindergarten student based on the month of enrollment.

ENGLISH LEARNER (EL) IDENTIFICATION FLOWCHART

Enrollment Month	Screener to Take
August – December	Kindergartener takes *Future Kindergarten*
January – March	Kindergartener takes *Kindergarten*
March – July	Pre-K takes *Future Kindergarten*; Kindergartener takes *Kindergarten*

Students with Disabilities

If a student enrolls in a school system with an accommodation plan (IEP, 504/IAP), the accommodation plan should be reviewed to determine the feasibility of screening the student for language proficiency. The Test Administrator (TA) must administer the ELPS with all applicable accommodations for statewide testing listed on the accommodation plan. See the *ELPS/ELPT Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* posted in the ELPT Portal for information on applicable accommodations. For questions on accommodations for the ELPS, please contact assessment@la.gov.

If a student enrolls and has evidence of hearing or vision impairment that might impact certain domains on the ELPS, but has no accommodation plan, a domain exemption can be requested. All domain exemption requests should be emailed to assessment@la.gov.
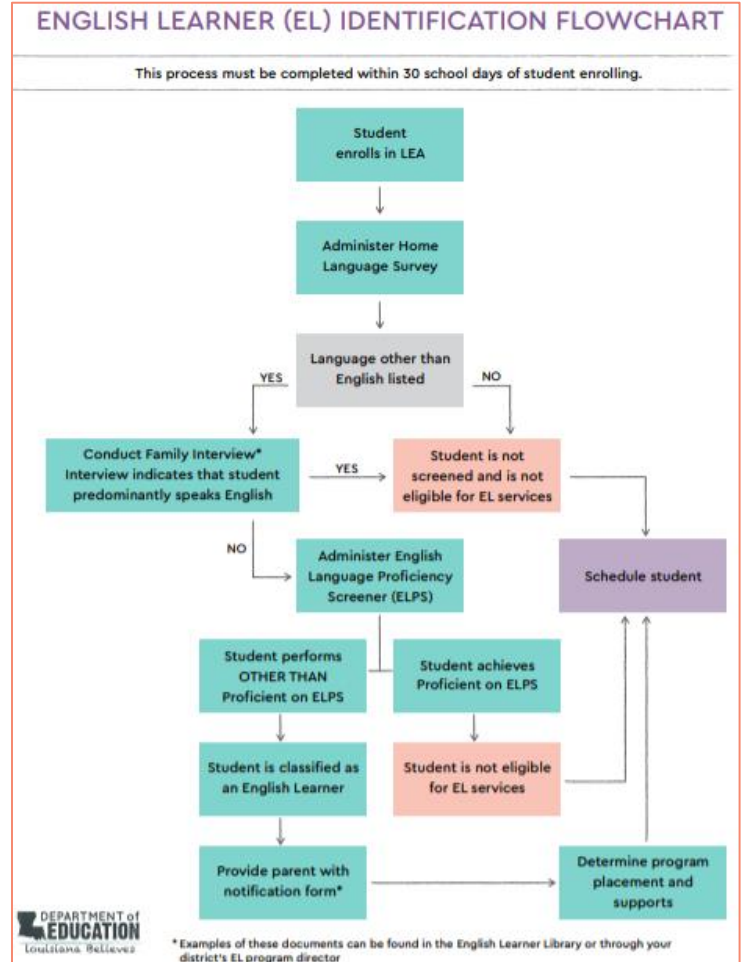
ELPS Administration

Test Setup

The ELPS is taken in the EL Portal, the same testing system used for the ELPT. Prior to testing, the Secure Browser must be installed on computers. Reference the *Configurations, Troubleshooting, and Advanced Secure Browser Installation Guides* for detailed directions. TAs, students, and accommodations are managed in the TIDE Portal. See the *Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) User Guide* for detailed directions on test setup requirements.

- DTCs and STCs have permission to add students to TIDE.
- Students must have a LASID in order to be entered into TIDE and take the ELPS.

Students need headsets with microphones for interacting with the online platform, the same type required for taking the ELPT. Read the *Assessment Technology Specifications* for the exact headset specifications.

The TA administers the ELPS through the TA Interface. A session must be created less than 20 minutes prior to administration in order to prevent the system from timing out.

The TA selects the grade band of the student taking the ELPS: Future Kindergarten (Grade 00), Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade Band 2-3, Grade Band 4-5, Grade Band 6-8, or Grade Band 9-12.
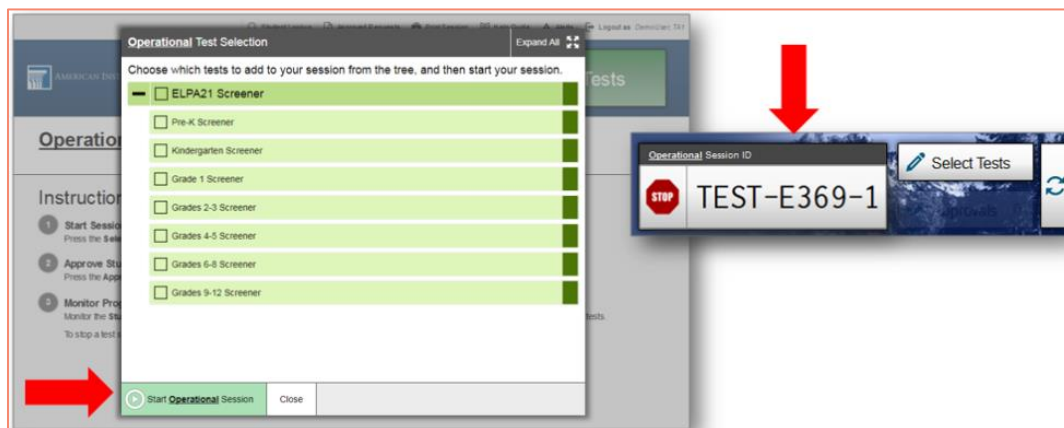
- A student should take the screener in the grade band that coincides with the grade they will potentially enter.
- A student who identifies as T9 should take the screener for grades 9-12 unless they will be attending classes with students in grade 8; in that case, the student should take the screener for grades 6-8.

Once a grade band is selected, the ELPS Session ID is generated. The student accesses the ELPS through the ELPT Portal using their first name, LASID, and teacher-provided Session ID. The student is required to conduct an Audio Playback Check and Recording Device Check prior to beginning the screener.

ELPS Features and Item Types

The ELPS is designed with the following features.

- Multiple stopping points so that students only take the entire screener if there is a possibility of scoring proficient
- Majority of score reports should be available the same day as screening is completed (after the first few weeks of the ELPS becoming available)
- Alternative formats like braille are available and may be requested from the LDOE by emailing assessment@la.gov

The ELPS consists of three item types.

- Selected Response (SR): The student responds to a question by selecting 1 option from 3 or 4 answer options.
- Constructed Response (CR): The student responds to a task by typing into a response box or speaking into the headset microphone.
- Technology-Enhanced (TE): The student responds to a question using technology features, such as drag and drop, dropdown menus, and text highlight.

Steps to Administering the ELPS

Step 1

The student interacts with items designed to familiarize them with the testing platform and to determine their comfort with technology. The TA needs to make two decisions

- Does this student have enough English skills to continue the screener?
- Is the student comfortable enough with technology to screen without TA assistance?

At the end of Step 1, the TA must answer two questions.

- If the student is unable to engage at all with the screener, choose D for question 1 and C for question 2. This will end the screener.
- If the TA chooses any other options, the screener will continue.

If a student is unable to participate in Step 1 because of limited English, the TA may skip to the questions at the end of Step 1. This will generate a score report of "Proficiency Not Demonstrated", and the student is identified as an EL, eligible for EL services.

If the TA feels that the student would benefit from additional practice with the testing platform before or during Step 1 of ELPS, the student may access the Online Tools Training (OTT).

**SYSTEM**

Online Tools Training

Become familiar with the testing system and types of questions on the operational tests.

Step 2

This step contains two parts composed of 28-32 total items. In the first part, the student responds to four speaking items, recorded into the testing platform through a headset or device microphone. During this section of the test, the headphones should be around the student's neck so the TA can hear the prompt as the student hears it. The microphone should be positioned near the student's mouth for an audible recording. The TA uses the *ELPS Step Two Speaking Scoring Document* to score responses when computer prompts the TA to do so.

It is best to listen as the student is responding. Once the student finishes the four speaking items:

1. This screen will prompt the student to give the computer to the TA.
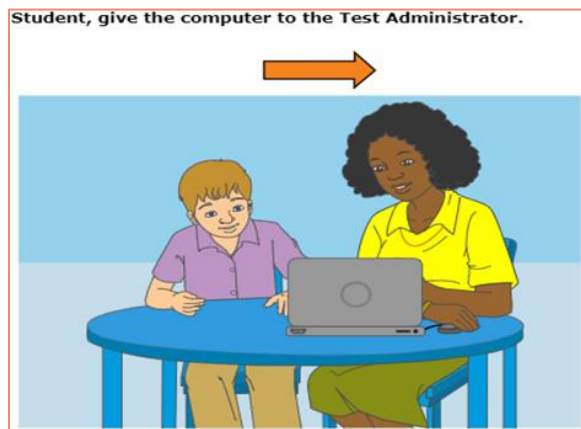
2. The TA will score the speaking items and then return the computer to the student.

Step 2 continues with tasks and questions from the remaining three domains.

Once the student reaches the end of Step 2, a review screen will appear. The red triangles indicate questions that have not been answered. The student may review their answers.

The student's performance in Step 2 determines whether they continue to Step 3.
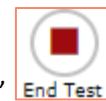
- A student who will not score "Proficient" will be prompted to select the "End Test" ![End Test button] button and will **not** go on to Step 3.
- A student who has the potential to score "Proficient" will continue on to Step 3 after the review screen.

Step 3

Approximately 25-30% of students continue to Step 3, which consists of 18-28 items across all four language domains, increasing in difficulty. The vendor scores all speaking and writing items. Kindergarten and Grade 1 screeners have two speaking tasks and no writing constructed-response (CR) task.

ELPS Administration Time

While ELPS is untimed, this table shows estimated times for administration per step.

Step	Estimated Time
Log-in process & Step 1	10-20 minutes
Step 2 (with Speaking tasks)	20-40 minutes
Step 3	30-40 minutes

Scoring and Reporting

The ELPS scores are available within 3-7 days of testing in the Reporting System. School test coordinators can access the individual report of each ELPS tester. Any student who attempts at least one question on the ELPS receives a student report.

The report includes a Proficiency Status (used to determine EL eligibility) and Domain Performance Levels (listening, speaking, reading, writing – used for instructional planning).

Performance Level	Definition
Level 1	**Beginning** - Displays few grade-level English skills and will benefit from EL program support
Level 2	**Early Intermediate** - Presents evidence of developing grade-level English language skills and will benefit from EL program support
Level 3	**Intermediate** - Applies some grade-level English language skills and will benefit from EL program support
Level 4	**Early Advanced** - Demonstrates English language skills required for engagement with grade-level academic content-instruction at a level comparable to non-ELs
Level 5	**Advanced** - Exhibits superior English language skills as measured by ELPS

The individual report contains the overall proficiency status based on the combination of domain performance levels for the student. The overall proficiency status indicates whether the student needs EL services.

Proficiency Status	Definition	EL?
Emerging	Students are Emerging when they have not yet reached a level of English language skill to produce, interpret, and collaborate on grade-level content-related academic tasks in English.	Yes
Progressing	Students are Progressing when, with support, they are approaching a level of English language skill necessary to produce, interpret, and collaborate on grade-level academic tasks in English.	Yes
Proficient	Students are Proficient when they demonstrate a level of English language skill necessary to independently produce, interpret, collaborate on and succeed in grade-level academic tasks in English.	No
Proficiency Not Determined	Students receive a status of Proficiency Not Demonstrated when screening is stopped in Step One due to the student not participating.	Yes

Resources

- ELPT Portal: houses all ELPS administration documents
- LDOE English Learner Library: houses all resources for EL instruction and assessment
- *ELPS/ELPT Accessibility and Accommodations Manual*: guides the selection and administration of appropriate universal features, designated features, and accommodations for individual students to produce valid assessment results
- *ELPS Step Two Speaking Scoring Guide*: assists school and school system personnel with scoring the first four speaking items
- *ELPS Test Administrator Manual (TAM)*: provides specific instructions for the administration of the ELPS, includes information on test security, logistical requirements, and the TA directions
- *ELPS/ELPT Test Administrator User Guide*: helps users navigate the Test Delivery System (TDS), including the Student Interface and the Test Administrator Interface, and supports Test Administrators to manage and administer ELPS
- *Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) User Guide*: provides directions for registering students for assessments, establishing test settings and accommodations, associating students with districts, schools, and rosters, and creating and approving testing appeals
- *Data Entry Interface (DEI) Manual*: provides specific instructions for using the DEI, which allows authorized users to enter student assessment data, such as item responses and scores
- *EL Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)*: contains frequently asked questions about the ELPT and ELPS
- *Reporting System User Guide*: provides information on how to use the reporting system to view student performance and participation data

Appendix

Speaking Sample Items

1. What are the boy and girl doing at the table?
2. Where are the two girls?
3. What is on the wall?
4. What can you see through the window?