

Revising ACCESS: Emphasizing Standard 1 in the Listening and Reading Tests

Video Transcript

Hi! I'm Sharon! And I'm Jason! We're back with Video 2 and our Revising ACCESS series to share changes coming to ACCESS in the 2025-26 school year. In this video, we take a look at the update we've planned for the Listening and Reading tests. As a reminder, the 2020 Edition of the WIDA English Language Development Standards is shaping updates to ACCESS.

In video 1, we summarized some key features of the 2020 Edition of the Standards. Now let's take a closer look at the Standards. As you can see, Standard 1: Language for Social and Instructional Purposes is a stand-alone Standard that also permeates the other Standards in the 2020 Edition. In other words, Standard 1 applies to a range of school settings, and it works both independently from and in conjunction with Standards 2 through 5. Standard 1 is not just for newcomers or young children, nor is it a precursor to learning, understanding, and using disciplinary language.

Standard 1 provides multilingual learners with opportunities to develop language at all proficiency levels and grades and in all content areas. That's right, Sharon! Language for Social and Instructional Purposes is key for multilingual learners' engagement in every discipline. This Standard covers a range of activities such as establishing routines, asking for clarification, and following procedures. The 2020 Edition of the Standards Framework acknowledges the importance of Standard 1 in language development by linking Standard 1 to the other four Standards.

To reflect this update to the Standards, ACCESS will have a greater focus on Standard 1. Jason, please tell us what specific change is coming. The ACCESS Listening and Reading tests will include more questions that assess Standard 1. When multilingual learners participate in content areas, they do so via social and instructional language. This change to the ACCESS Listening and Reading tests better reflects what happens in classrooms in schools as social and instructional language permeates students' academic experiences.

Let's look at an example of how this change will impact the Listening and Reading tests. Questions in the Listening and Reading tests are grouped into thematic folders. Each folder begins with an orientation to the theme, for example, Studying Rocks. Then, students respond to three questions in each folder.

In the current version of ACCESS, the three items in a Listening or Reading folder all focus on a specific Standard. The revised Listening and Reading folders will all feature one item that focuses on Standard 1: Language for Social and Instructional Purposes.

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This example shows Standard 1 as the second item in this folder. However, the questions that focus on Standard 1 can appear as item one, two, or three in each Listening and Reading folder. This approach to assessment emphasizes the relationship between Standard 1 and Standards 2 through 5.

That's right! The language used in content teaching and learning doesn't exist in isolation from Language for Social and Instructional Purposes.

We hope you've enjoyed learning about the updates we're planning for the Listening and Reading tests in response to the 2020 Edition of the WIDA ELD Standards.

We want educators and multilingual learners to be ready for the revised ACCESS test in the 2025-26 school year. Please stay tuned for more videos in this Revising ACCESS series, as we look forward to sharing updates with you! Please bookmark our Revising ACCESS page on the WIDA website to stay up to date.