

FAQ Series: Language Expectations



What are Language Expectations?

Language Expectations are goals for content-driven language learning. They are the statements most similar to what educators generally find in academic content standards. The 2020 Edition provides Language Expectations for all grade-level clusters.

Language Expectations are derived from academic content standards, and they describe the language necessary for meeting grade-level academic content standards.

Language Expectations are built around a set of Language Functions. The example below shows a Language Expectation for grade 1 Language Arts, with Language Functions listed as bullet points.

ELD-LA.1.Narrate.Interpretive

Interpret language arts narratives by

- Identifying a central message from key details
- Identifying how character attributes and actions contribute to an event
- Identifying words and phrases that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses

ELD-LA.1.Narrate.Expressive

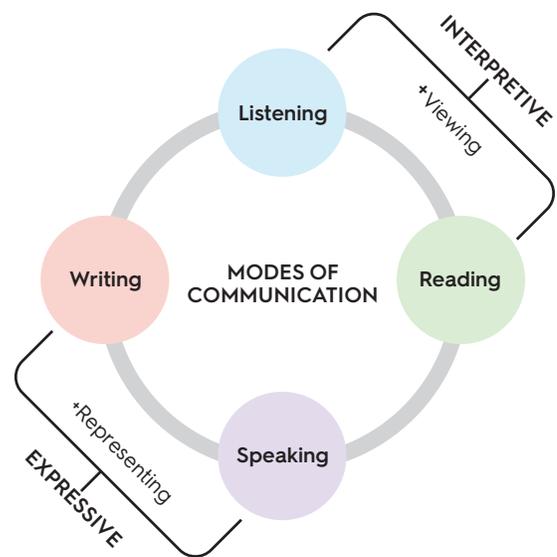
Construct language arts narratives that

- Orient audience to story
- Develop story events
- Engage and adjust for audience

Why are Language Expectations divided into two communication modes?

As part of the 2020 Edition's mission to increase accessibility options for students and emphasize multimodal forms of communication, Language Expectations are articulated in two expanded communication modes: interpretive (listening, reading, and viewing) and expressive (speaking, writing, and representing).

These communication modes highlight that students communicate through listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but they also communicate through gestures, facial expressions, images, equations, maps, symbols, and other means. Multimodal communication does not only provide support for developing language, but rather is an essential path for all students to make meaning. This move to use interpretive and expressive communication modes is further intended to remind educators that students must be offered multiple means to engage, interpret, represent, act, and express their ideas in the classroom.



What are Language Functions, and how are they related to Language Expectations?

Language Functions are common patterns of language use that showcase particular ways students might use language in school. For example, a series of Language Functions is associated with the

process of constructing fictional narratives, informing peers of newly gained knowledge, explaining phenomena, or engaging in scientific argumentation. In the example shown here, Language Functions associated with Narrate in grade 1 Language Arts are highlighted in yellow.

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What are Language Features, and how do they work together with Language Functions?

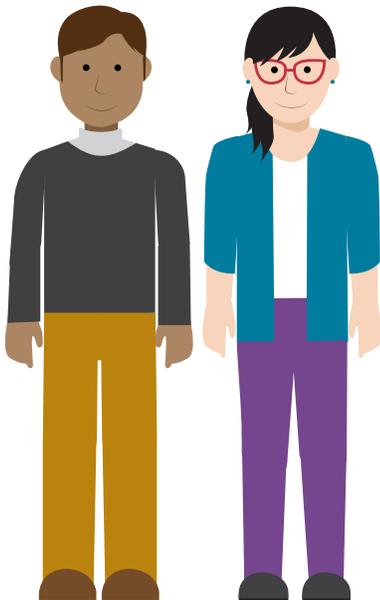
Language Features are examples of various language resources that carry out particular Language Functions. They include different types of sentences, clauses, phrases, and words. The example below shows two Language Features for the Language Function “Orient audience to story.”

Orient audience to story through...

- Pictures, words, title, statements, or common story expressions (*Once upon a time*) to introduce context
- Noun groups to state who or what the story is about (*the white swans, Joey’s big family*)

Do Language Expectations take the place of any component found in previous editions of the WIDA ELD Standards?

In response to requests from the field, the 2020 Edition retires the more generative Model Performance Indicators (MPIs). In their place, more stable Language Expectations add specificity and concreteness to the WIDA ELD Standards Statements.



Where can I learn more about the Language Expectations?



Section 2 introduces the Language Expectations. Section 3 helps educators put the WIDA ELD Standards Framework into action and contains more detail about the Language Expectations for each grade-level cluster.