

WIDA ELD Framework Implementation: What, When, and How?

Welcome to WIDA Webinars. This is a free virtual learning opportunity that offers educators insights and resources on a variety of topics relevant to educators of multilingual learners.

In this webinar, you'll hear from WIDA's expert staff and researchers. If you want to be notified about upcoming WIDA webinars, sign up for our newsletters at wida.wisc.edu/news.

This webinar is designed to support you as you implement the WIDA ELD Standards Framework 2020 into your teaching practice. At WIDA, we believe that multilingual learners need education characterized by equity of opportunity and access by integration of content and language, and by a functional approach to language development and through collaboration among stakeholders.

These are our four big ideas in the 2020 Edition of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework. And we'll talk about making some of these ideas practical through the Standards Framework. As we only have an hour today, so we're moving quickly through some of these big picture components and then slowing down and digging into some of the areas that may still be a little bit new to you in the 2020 Edition of the Standards Framework.

Before we get started, I always like to mention a little bit about our can do approach, because it really is the cornerstone of everything we do here. And in fact, we have a foundational document that speaks to this which is called our can do philosophy. Essentially, it means that we believe recognizing and focusing on student assets, contributions, and potential will have a long-term impact on their success. And that's the mindset we need to think about what our students can do, rather than what they can't do. Alright with that, we're going to dive in and look at how we can implement the standards.

And the way we're going to do this is through looking at an example unit plan in detail. And my hope is that even if you don't teach this particular grade level or content area, by showing you an example, we can make the different components of the standards very practical, hopefully applicable in any content or grade level. As an example unit, we're working today with two teachers, Molly and Kate, who are planning a kindergarten and first grade unit, and they started their unit planning by choosing a science standard that's focused on the idea plants and animals grow and change over time. It's a life cycle unit.

Alright, we're going to dive into the unit a little bit deeper. First step when we look at planning is always to go to the standards, identify the standards and the content area that you're working with. And it's so important that multilingual learners have equitable access to grade level content learning. And that's why we always want to connect our language work to the content we're working with. In this case, Kate's multilingual learners are working on a science unit. We know

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we're looking at standard four, the language for science, along with standard one, which is a part of all standards.

Next step is to look at the key language uses. Key language uses describe prominent ways that language is used in school, and these can help educators make choices to prioritize and organize their content and language integration. After you identify which content you're working with, identifying the key language use that's most prominent in your unit is the next step. Key language uses are also an organizing feature of the WIDA 2020 ELD Standards.

And that means all of the language features and proficiency level descriptors are organized into these four groups. Narrate, inform, explain, and argue, which we represent them as overlapping circles because we know there's overlap between these four groups. Let's look at our lifecycles unit plan and see if we can identify what our most prominent key language use is. In our lifecycles unit, the teachers have decided the final assessment will be to create a poster and share with classmates the sequence of the stages of a butterfly lifecycle. They're making a poster and sharing with classmates about the stages of a butterfly lifecycle.

I'd like you to consider here which key language use is most prominent, and then you can click your answer in the poll. We have four options. We have inform, explain, narrate and argue. We decide based on our unit assessment and the main learning tasks. Everyone has it a little bit harder because so far, I've only given you the unit assessment. I'll give you time to share your responses. Thank you all for sharing your responses.

It looks like we are split, or you all are split about half between inform and explain. And this teacher did choose inform as her key language use. She identified this key language use by considering her summative assessment and her main learning activities. And she decided that the key language use for this unit is inform because the students will be sharing facts and information about the lifecycle of a butterfly.

It doesn't mean that they'll never use the other key language uses in the unit. They may be explaining at times, narrating at times. But this one is the one that this teacher chose as most prominent. And for this unit it will be the focus. And we do recommend at WIDA that for a unit you just choose one key language use because it provides a way to focus the language instruction.

But there is no right or wrong response when it comes to which one you choose. As long as you choose one to provide some focus. Also don't worry if your answer was different than inform. Great, thank you. Thank you, Jen, our wonderful moderator for sharing some useful links in the chat box, which you can also take a look at there.

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Alright, I'm going to quickly recap what we've done so far. We've taken a unit which was first grade or kindergarten science and were focusing on what academic grade level content standards we're working on. We know we're looking at a science unit focused on how animals grow and change over time. After that, we're looking for the most prominent key language use. Asking ourselves, how will students be expected to produce language in this unit? We decided on inform.

And our next step here that we're going to really dig into is thinking about the language features and organizational features that are expected in this content area and grade level. And this step allows us to really consider where our students currently are and what language need most to be successful with whatever tasks we're asking them to do. In order to complete this step of the planning process, we need to look at the standards. And we're going to take a closer look together. I just want to remind you on the left side here, we have our unit standard and our unit assessment that helps guide our instructional choices as we look through these standards.

The first step is making sure we're on the right page. We look at the top of the standards page to make sure that we're at the right grade level. We have grade one. We're in the science standards language for science. And dark green box shows us that we're in inform or our key language use. Then we can dig deeper or look at our language expectations. In this light green box, we see that we have interpretive expectations, which focus on listening and reading. And on the right side that we have highlighted for you is the expressive expectations, which focus on writing and speaking.

And since our unit assessment is focused on writing and speaking, we'll focus on this expressive box. And these are ways that students might be expected to use language to achieve a task in content. Taking a look at the bullet points to consider if the bullet points apply to our unit. First bullet point is constructing scientific informational texts that introduce others to a topic or entity.

As a teacher looking at it, I think it fits our goals pretty well because in this unit I'm asking students to inform others of the sequence of a lifecycle. And next bullet is about define, describe, and clarify concepts, topics, or entities. And since sequencing is kind of a way of classifying. I can see how that one really fits too. Looking at the third one, I'm not sure if that completely fits, which is fine since two is plenty to work with. After we've identified, we're definitely on the right page because these language expectations fit what I hope to achieve with this unit. I can look at the language features. And list of language features for each language function in the standards shows a list of sample language features that are associated with that language function.

Also bullet points, they're not exhaustive lists because it's impossible to list all the ways that humans might organize and use language. The language features listed here help accomplish this particular language function. It's just ideas, good ideas, but they are just ideas. And we're really thinking now about the way students are being asked to speak and to write. And the

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way we're asking them to use language to accomplish purposes. And the language functions name some of these purposes.

And the features name some of the language resources students are using in their speaking and writing. I might start thinking about the second bullet here. I might take a look at the corresponding language function and highlighted in green. As you can see, there is a connection between the bullet points in the light green box to the functions here. Taking a closer look at how I might support my students.

What language I might teach for students to describe and classify. I'll look at these bullet points. I will give you a moment to review the bullet points for information. As I am looking, I notice that there's a sample language feature. It's talking about sequence words. As a teacher, I think about my students and decide my focus because I know my students maybe aren't so strong with sequence words yet.

And they really need this language to accomplish my unit assessment. It's all about sequencing. I might pick this as one of my language objectives. And a unit may just have one language objective which is completely fine. But you may also want to choose more than one. It depends on your needs. How long is the unit? How comfortable you are with language objectives. Let's say you want to do another one. Choose one unit objective on sequencing words. But we also want another one. I'd like to turn this to using your own experience since these are just examples. What language features might you choose to focus on during the unit? I will give you some time to pick and share in the chat.

What language features might you choose to focus on if you were teaching this unit. I see a lot of you saying visuals or scientific visuals to support information. I see some of you are saying timeless verbs. Timeless verbs and visuals are coming across strong labeling visuals. Great. I see nouns as well. Noun groups. And it's always a little bit tricky to think about what features you might focus on when you don't actually know the students because it depends on what they're already strong in and what they need next.

Absolutely, Monica. Let's take a look at what teachers decided. Kate and Molly decided to choose as their language objectives. Kate and Molly want students to be able to introduce others to a topic using simple sentences, describe a topic through verbs and present tense to label actions and sequencing words to clarify order of events. Everyone has the same mindset as teachers planning this unit. It is not just one answer since the goal is just to choose language that your students need in order to be successful. Kate chose to work on multiple language features in her unit because she had about six to eight weeks to work on it. And she had several lessons where she could support her students in developing this language. Always choose language objectives over the course of a unit rather than different ones for each lesson.

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Because it takes time and practice for students to actually begin to use a new language. And if you're just starting out, we recommend you begin with one language feature until you get comfortable. Kate was planning her language lessons. She thought about ways her students could meet these language objectives. Just a few thoughts. She had students read texts on animal lifecycles. Students identified the declarative sentences and verbs together. Students practiced using the target language with a partner. Students used realia or hands-on objects. Students used word banks, sequence words, verbs orally, and in writing. Students created a book with a title where they labeled pictures. Students wrote declarative sentences together or simple sentences, using the verbs and sequence words that they had practiced orally. Here are a lot of ways the teacher planned after using or after deciding on her language objectives.

After the language expectations, the next resource in the WIDA ELD Standards is the proficiency level descriptors. And this helps us to answer the question. How might we scaffold learning for our students? Proficiency level descriptors are an articulation of student language performance across six levels of English language proficiency. Proficiency level descriptors are written in either interpretive mode, so that's reading and listening or expressive mode, reading and or speaking and writing expressive. And they also represent different dimensions of language use. We can look at discourse level, which is the big picture of a text sentence level. Looking at sentences and then down to the word or phrase level. And educators can use the proficiency level descriptors to look at language expectations across proficiency levels.

And these can also help inform differentiation and scaffolding. We don't differentiate the unit language and content learning goal because the standard is the same. We don't change that. But the scaffolding practices that each student might need may be different as they engage in understanding new ideas and expressing their ideas. Anticipating these opportunities for students to stretch their language includes not just looking at the assessment scores, but also looking at samples of writing and oral language production. You might use portfolios or other artifacts which is more of a holistic approach that helps identify where a student might be along the proficiency level continuum and proficiency level. I always get this question.

Proficiency level descriptors are different from the can do descriptors because they're directly connected with the language expectations. As you will see in just a little bit. Back to the science unit. An example of student work. Look at the image. It looks like part of stage one. We see a picture of a butterfly labeled fly. It looks like it may have just laid some yellow eggs on a leaf, which is labeled leaf. And remember the language expectation we're working towards.

It is to have students introduce others to a topic using simple sentences. Let's take a look at the proficiency level descriptors. We're looking at the sentence level right now. We can see that where it says criteria. And we can see it says extend or enhance meanings

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through. And then we have different descriptors for different levels. Looking at our students writing here. I see they're using pictures, words, and chunks of language. We have two words. I'm thinking that we're probably at the end of level one. I don't know what the student was able to produce orally. I'm assuming it was more than what they were able to produce in writing. What we can do now is use this tool to think about the next step for the student for language learning. We see them moving towards sentence fragments and emerging use of simple sentences. It's the trajectory of their learning.

Thinking about our expectation of introducing others to a topic using simple sentences, what scaffolds or instructional strategies might you use to support the learner. Share your ideas with each other. It looks like we have 300 teachers in the room to collect ideas in the chat. I see a lot of sentence starters, word banks, sentence frames, close passages, talk routine to practice orally before writing. That's such an important precursor to using sentence frame. We practiced those sentences with our students before we offered them scaffolding for writing. I love it. And I see a few more of you said that as well. Text in primary language with modeled connections to English.

That is a great way to leverage home language using cognate list. Absolutely. It's such a powerful tool to support students in developing vocabulary. I say collaborative writing or writing into languages. Absolutely. Those are powerful ways using translanguaging. Such a good way to support students in their writing. A graphic organizer might support these students as well. Thank you so much for sharing your ideas. We're going to look at the discourse dimension. If we look under criteria, we've switched to the discourse, which means we're looking at the text as a whole or how the text is organized. How text fits together. Proficiency level descriptor asks students to create coherent texts. And we look at descriptors to see where our students are. It's at level one with single words, phrases, or chunks of language to represent ideas.

We're moving towards some different goals. We're moving towards phrases or short sentences to represent ideas with an intended purpose. Again, one of our intended purposes here is order. We want our students to be able to put things in order and express the way the order goes together. How might you scaffold or teach sequencing words to clarify order. Share your ideas. I see a lot of ideas using pictures, sequencing cards, flow maps, telling stories, making it personal. It's a wonderful idea. Using flashcards with pictures to place an order. Analyzing a text together to make language visible. That's such a powerful practice showing students how scientists use sequencing words to show order and why it's important. Grouping sequence words similar meanings.

Absolutely. And that's such a great thing to do while you're looking at a model text. Following a recipe. Personal narrative. Listing steps or sequence of tasks and activities. I love that because that gives students a chance to share a little bit about themselves. Bring a little of their culture and personal experience into the room. It's story maps, target vocabulary, yet movable sequencing cards. Love that. Thank you for sharing that. Thank you for sharing the ideas. After

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this student was provided with explicit language instruction and opportunities to practice the target language. A lot of what you already talked about or visuals, reality, actual physical objects for oral language practice. This student was able to write these sentences with support. Students wrote the butterfly is in the egg and the egg is on the leaf. We can see how much this student has achieved through some explicit and focused instruction. And there are some important factors to consider when you're using proficiency level descriptors to scaffold. When organizing groups of students, it's really important to consider student language background and how grouping students with similar language backgrounds might provide opportunities for them to draw in their home languages as they make sense of new content and as they process their learning.

Additionally, if you're teaching a class with multiple proficiency levels, proficiency level descriptors can help provide some guidance into what number of scaffolding students at various proficiency levels may need at a given task. Also a really nice conversation focus if you're co-teaching or working with a grade level team. Researchers that we'd also recommend providing a variety of ways for students to engage or express themselves as they build proficiency in English. As an example, maybe they can use models to demonstrate their understanding or use visuals to show their understanding.

It's just some important considerations or ways to use proficiency level descriptors. And then I'd like to kind of summarize this process by offering you a few reflection questions as you plan your units. What is the grade level content or standard that our students need? How is the language being used in this context? Or what is the purpose for language use? And what are the language functions and features that are essential to accomplish these academic tasks? How do we scaffold learning from multilingual learners at different proficiency levels? We did get into each of these questions.

WIDA ELD Standards Framework does provide guidance and resources for each of these questions. And now I'd like to highlight some resources in the implementation guide that can help you do this work. Standard implementation guide was released in June of 2023. It was designed to help educators implement the WIDA ELD Standards Framework. Thank you, Molly, for putting that link in the chat. If you click on that link, you can download the implementation guide. It is much more detailed than this presentation.

And it also has many examples of what this could look like. As an example, it was one unit plan. Also, implementation guide has several other examples as well. If you'd like to follow along, please open the document. But if you'd like to just watch, that's okay too. I'd just like to highlight a few pages from the implementation guide that I think are really amazing. Page 16 is a unit planning template. And this template is based off the model from understanding by design that you might already be familiar with. But this version of the unit planning template adds in language focused considerations for unit planning. And it's meant to be a template so you can adjust the parts, based on whatever your school uses or whatever your district uses. I think this unit planner would be so

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useful if you are co-teaching or co-planning a unit or even trying to get other educators to consider the language in a content-based unit. Page 20 is a table to support educators to analyze student work using the proficiency level descriptors. And this would be another really great tool in collaboration or even individual reflection.

As you look at student work. And it has a little note at the top. It says start by just focusing on one row. And the idea is you take a piece of student work, you choose where in the dimensions you want to focus. Maybe you just want to look at the word level or consider how a student is using vocabulary. Then you have a row of some questions and considerations for you to think about what students can do and plan for the future. And then if you're an administrator, there is also an administrator supplement to the WIDA 2020 ELD Standards implementation guide.

It is in addition to the implementation guide but focused more on systematic planning implementation at a building or a district level. If you are supporting this implementation process, it is an awesome tool if interested. It has some really great tips on where to start. How to plan for implementation at that level. There is an upcoming WIDA webinar in May that will just focus on the administrator supplement. If interested, you can click on upcoming webinars and register for any webinars that you find useful to you. Would you all please help us all out by scanning this QR code. I believe that the link will be in there.

Molly just posted the link. It's a very quick survey. We appreciate your feedback on the webinar and your ideas for what you'd like to see coming up next. We really love your feedback. If you'd be willing to fill this out, we would really appreciate it. If any of you have questions, go ahead and put that in the chat. I see a few questions. I know some of you are still filling out the survey. Please consider any questions you might have and fill out the survey. I see there's quite a few questions. I am more than happy to answer. The first is why was unit about inform or focused on inform but not explain.

Participant thought inform would be like giving a biography or facts and explain would be explaining the phenomenon of an event like the butterfly lifecycle. I would say that this unit was actually on the border of inform and explain. And we saw that the key language uses were like a Venn diagram overlapping. What I always did was I look at the page. I would look at inform and explain in the standards and consider which fit my objectives more.

In this case, the teacher looks at inform or bullet points that talk about sequencing words and simple sentences to introduce the topic. She thought that for her kindergartners, they were more at the informed level in this assessment. Students were more informing about using simple sentences to share what happens, the facts of each stage of a life cycle, rather than explaining why something happens or how something really happens. I would say you could have a unit on the same standard with explain, depending on the assessment, maybe if the assessment was a bit different. I hope that

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answers your question. WIDA ELD Standards Framework gives language expectations and functions based on the most prominent key language uses.

Should we only focus on the most prominent areas? Yes. Researchers say that we should just focus on one key language use at a time per unit. Because otherwise it gets overwhelming. And our main learning activities. We pick one key language use to focus on which is the most effective approach. Standards researchers and folks that have tried some of these things say it as well. Also there is a whole section on key language uses. If you take a look at the section. It might help you provide some more detail on why it's like that or why we choose one instead of two or three. Where do the language objectives come from? It's a good question. What we do is first start with a content objective. It is backwards design. We look at the assessment. And the WIDA standards provide guidance on what language students might need in order to be successful in that assessment towards the content objective.

WIDA Standards support you to create the language objective. Thank you. Are there any secondary examples? Also the implementation guide. I believe has a secondary example. If you go to the implementation guide and scroll down. There are four classroom stories. If you look at one of the four stories to see examples at a different level. Thanks again for your wonderful feedback. It is lovely. Our units are written to cover two or three genres. Should we pick one language use per genre, or try to pick one that spans those different genres? I think it is a situation where you would have to look yourself to decide which one fits your purpose best. Units are written to cover two or three genres. It's more topical or you pick a topic. Write a persuasive speech and a research paper for the same unit. If you're picking one. Always pick the assessment you think students have the most trouble with as your focus area. As you start to feel confident with that. As you consider how much time you have.

Afterwards, you can expand it. First grade science has only inform and explain, not narrate and argue. Standards Framework. We have distribution charts that show based on research in each grade level or content area. How often are students being asked to do each of the key language uses? If there's not a page for narrate or argue in science. It means that the researchers believe based on the different content standards in the United States. Key language use wasn't very prominent in the content area.

It doesn't mean you will never do it. Because there still might be an opportunity to narrate in first grade science. It just means it's not prominent. What you can do is consider your standards. I would make sure that it is really the most prominent for your unit. Also check nearby grade levels to see what is coming next. If you're thinking about argue in first grade science. Check the next grade level of argue in science to get idea.

I love the responses. Wonderful. We're collaborative teachers in the United States. Awesome. Also, several questions about the recording. Recording will be shared on the

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website under WIDA webinars. Also are secondary examples in the implementation guide. Examples and links to the videos. If you're interested in watching a video of a teacher talking about the lesson. Also, a question about digital or online. It might be of interest to you. I'd like to give you all a thank you. Thank you for participating in the webinar. If you have any questions, please reach out to us. WIDA CSC is wonderful and always here to help you. Thank you so much. Hope you have a wonderful day too!