

# Supporting Newcomers and English Learners: Targeted Teacher Actions

| Student “Can Do” Tasks CEFR Global Scale <sup>i</sup>  | Student English Proficiency WIDA Assessment Levels <sup>ii</sup>  | Teacher Instructional Language   | Teacher Actions   | Teacher Socio-Cultural and Affective Actions <sup>iii</sup>  |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Basic User A1</b></p> <p>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</p>   | <p>At the <b>Entering (1)</b> level, learners will process, understand, produce, or use:</p> <p>Pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas.</p> <p>Words, phrases, or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH-, choice, or yes/no questions, or statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support.</p> <p>Oral language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors<sup>iv</sup> that often impede meaning when presented with basic oral commands, direct questions or simple statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support.</p> | <p><b>Use repetitive words paired with simple sensory, graphic, or interactive prompts:</b></p> <p>Show me the...</p> <p>Check or nod “Yes” or “No”...</p> <p><i>Airplane. (Teacher points to an image). This is an airplane. Show me the airplane. (Teacher gestures for student to indicate response and repeats “airplane”, as needed.).</i></p>                              | <p>Teach classroom words and social expressions.</p> <p>Use visuals, gestures, and tone of voice.</p> <p>Label items in class.</p>  | <p>Learn to pronounce students’ names.</p> <p>Acknowledge counties of origin on a map.</p> <p>Ensure each newcomer has a peer to navigate the building and to work in groups.</p>  |
| <p><b>Basic User A2</b></p> <p>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.</p>                                | <p>At the <b>Developing (3)</b> level, learners will process, understand, produce, or use:</p> <p>General and some specific language of the content areas.</p> <p>Expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs.</p> <p>Oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning, when presented with oral or written, narrative, or expository descriptions with sensory, graphic, or interactive support.</p>   | <p><b>Use prompts with visual aids to elicit simple description or responses in short sentences or loosely-organized paragraphs:</b></p> <p><i>Describe the airplane. What does the inside of an airplane look like? What does the outside look like?</i></p>  | <p>Teach academic vocabulary separately (e.g., analyze, justify).</p> <p>Use more wait-time during whole-class discussions.</p> <p>Read for main ideas.</p> <p>Encourage graphic organizers for students to convey their understanding of complex concepts.</p> <p>Focus feedback on quality of message (meaning) when errors impede understanding.</p>                 | <p>Use student grouping to promote interaction and communication in English.</p> <p>Use student grouping to promote understanding of content /curriculum (use first language as a scaffold).</p> <p>Rephrase what student says (if needed) during whole class discussions to aid comprehension and model accurate pronunciation or phrasing.</p> <p>Use readings or videos to explain topics that feature heroes/experts from cultures around the world (e.g., Nobel Prize winners, artists, sports figures) to connect curriculum to background or prior knowledge.</p> |
| <p><b>Independent User B1</b></p> <p>Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.</p>                 | <p>At the <b>Expanding (4)</b> level, learners will process, understand, produce, or use:</p> <p>Specific and some technical language of the content area.</p> <p>A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related sentences, or paragraphs.</p> <p>Oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication when presented with oral or written connected discourse with sensory, graphic, or interactive support.</p>   | <p><b>Use prompts requiring students to expand on their ideas through description with sentences of varying complexity and/or paragraphs that are related:</b></p> <p><i>Explain the differences and similarities between a Dash 8 and a Boeing 747. Are they more similar or different? Why?</i></p>  | <p>Provide support with reading for details/secondary arguments within the text.</p> <p>Provide support with interpretative literacy strategies or prompts for making inferences.</p> <p>Model sentence frames and expressions to connect ideas in lab reports, for example.</p> <p>Focus feedback on quality of language (accuracy) when it impedes understanding.</p> | <p>Invite students to be peer helpers or translators.</p> <p>Engage students to elaborate during conferencing or self-assessments.</p> <p>Teach students language to engage in peer-conferencing or feedback.</p> <p>Invite students to share what they have been reading about, listening to or doing in their first language/culture.</p> <p>If the topic area allows, encourage students to incorporate expertise and resources from other parts of the world into their projects or presentations.</p>   |
| <p><b>Independent User B2</b></p> <p>Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</p> | <p>At the <b>Bridging (5)</b> level, learners will process, understand, produce, or use:</p> <p>Specialized or technical language of the content areas.</p> <p>A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays, or reports.</p> <p>Oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers when presented with grade-level material.</p>   | <p><b>Use prompts with hypothetical or conditional language:</b></p> <p><i>If your friends asked you to jump from a plane using a parachute, would you do it? Why or why not?</i></p> <p><b>Use prompts with prompts with passive or negative language:</b></p> <p><i>Had you jumped, could you have been hurt from the fall? Should you have done this? Why or why not?</i></p> | <p>Teach critical literacy strategies or other procedures in steps.</p> <p>Use graphic organizers to support student writing (e.g., sequencing ideas, arguments and counter arguments, cause and effect, evaluation and synthesis).</p> <p>Focus feedback on sentence structure and argumentation.</p>  | <p>Encourage students to engage with the curriculum in a safe and a positive environment by providing opportunities to share experiences and worldviews.</p> <p>Encourage students to voice concerns and to self-advocate or to advocate for others.</p> <p>Encourage students to reflect on how their identity is constantly being shaped as they interact in society.</p>  |

<sup>i</sup> Council of Europe. (2001). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. London, England: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>ii</sup> WIDA Consortium. (2012). The English Language Learner Can Do Booklet. Retrieved from: www.wida.us

<sup>iii</sup> Newcomers, regardless of their language skills, may also go through stages of cultural adjustment (culture shock), as they adapt to their new community. To support language learning, it is also advisable to respond effectively to any changes in behaviour that may reflect a student’s feelings of excitement, fatigue, frustration, disengagement, apprehension or acceptance of new surroundings.

<sup>iv</sup> Respectively, phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors occur when there are inaccuracies in sounds, grammar or meaning.