



# The ABC's of Assessment with English Language Learners

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National Reading First Conference

July 2007, St. Louis

## Outline of Content

- \* Building Our Background Knowledge
- \* Principles of Unbiased Assessment
- \* ELL Assessment Capacity
- \* Case Study

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## The Questions That Drive Your Assessment

What is the purpose of this assessment?

What question are we trying to answer?

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## Teamwork!!!

- Keep in mind that you are not alone.
- Lean on your teammates.
- Don't forget your specialist!
- SPSY, SPED,  
& SLP especially



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## Building Our Background Knowledge

Important Facts and Foundations



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In both elementary (Pre-K to Grade 5) and secondary (Grades 6-12) education, more ELLs in America are native born than are foreign born.

In elementary grades, 24% of ELLs are foreign-born (first generation Americans), while 44% of secondary ELL students are foreign-born.

Capps, R., Fix, M., Murray, J., Ost, J., Passel, J., & Herwanto, S. (2005). *The new demography of America's schools: Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

## The Most Common 5

According to State-reported data from the 2000-2001 school year ELL students speak more than *460 languages*. Among those languages, the five most commonly spoken are:

- 1 Spanish (79.0%)
- 2 Vietnamese (2.0%)
- 3 Hmong (1.6%)
- 4 Cantonese (1.0%)
- 5 Korean (1.0%)

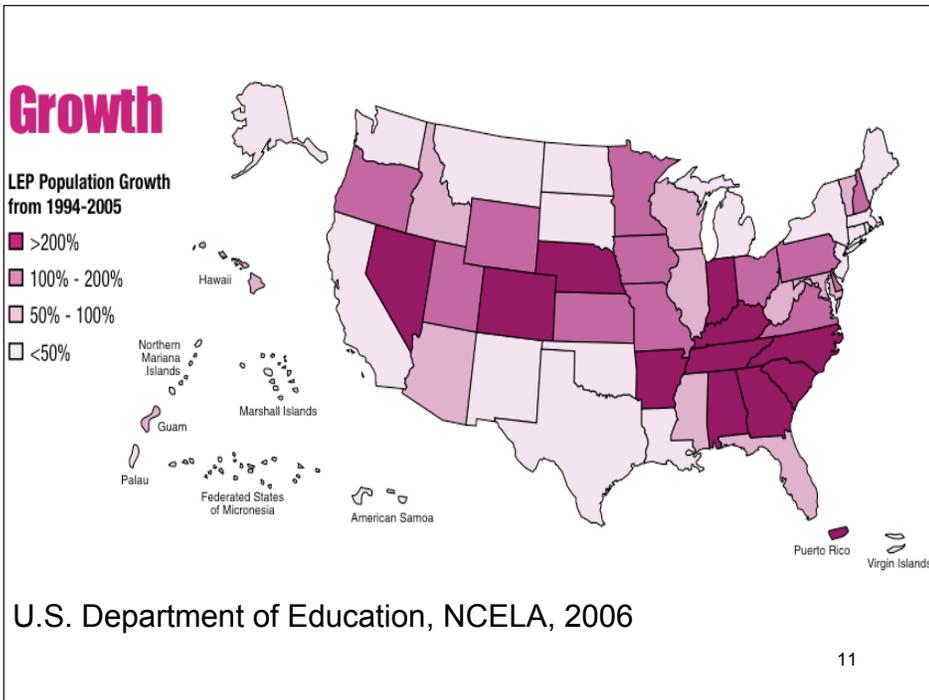
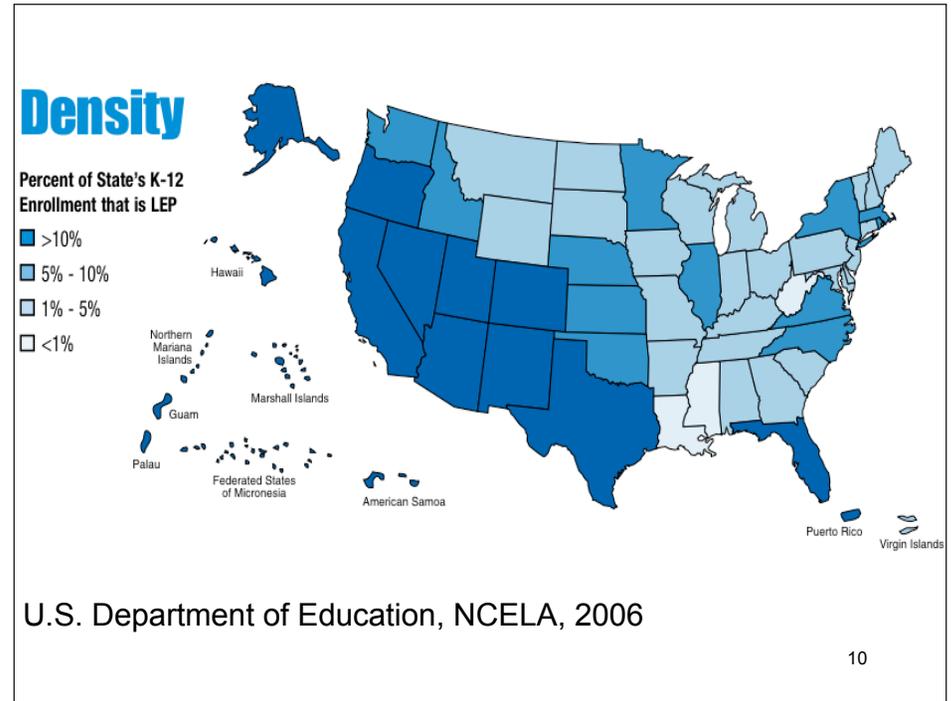
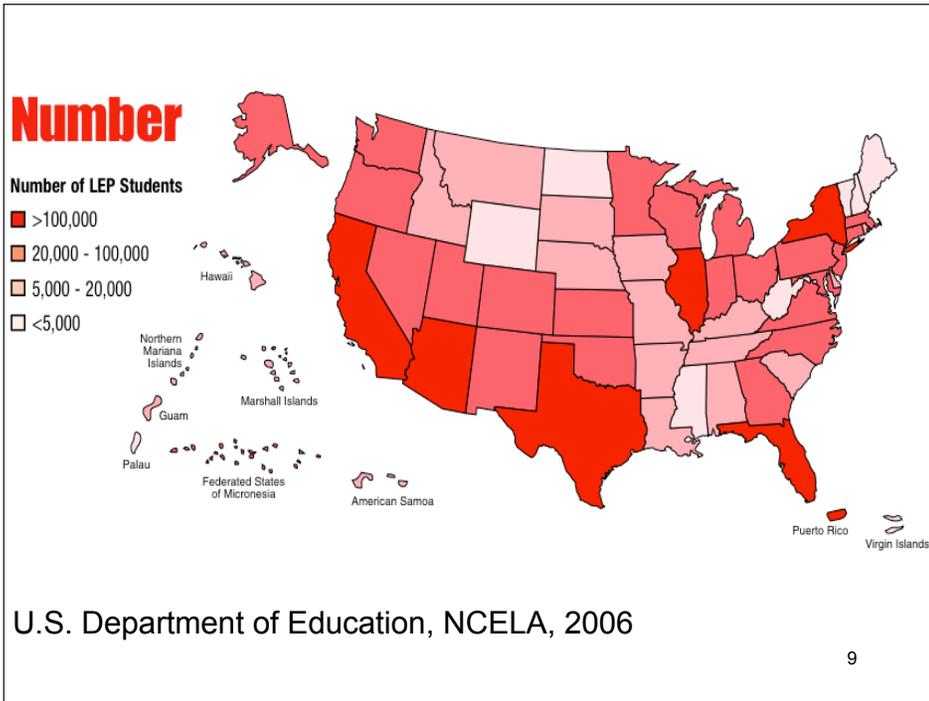
Survey of the States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Educational Programs and Services 2000-2001 Summary Report (Kindler, 2002)

## Drum Roll Please . . .

The five states with the largest populations of ELLs in public schools are:

- 1 California (1,591,525)
- 2 Texas (684,007)
- 3 Florida (299,346)
- 4 New York (203,583)
- 5 Illinois (192,764)

NCELA, 2004-2005



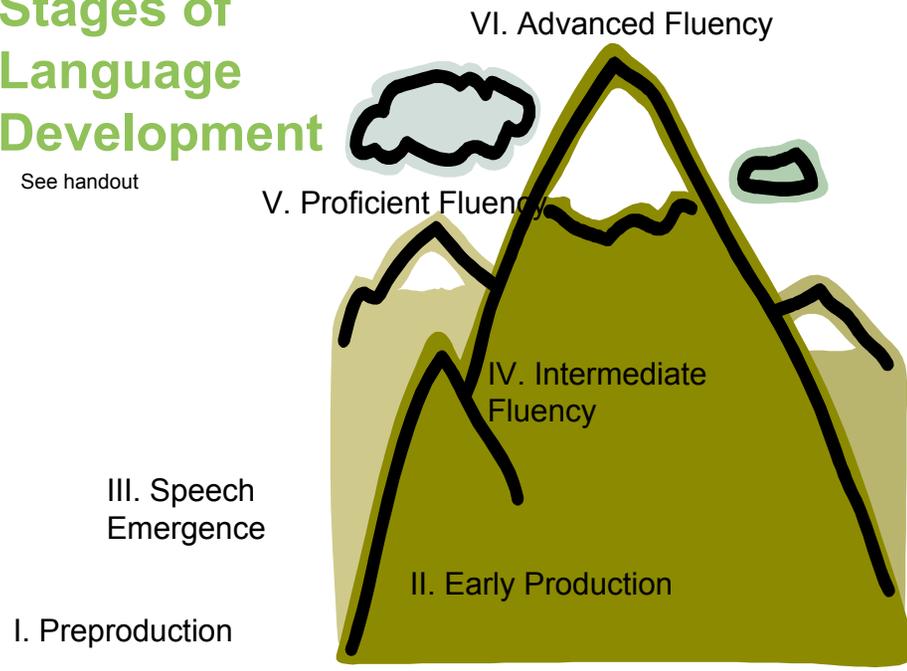
## Adding to the Challenge: I'll Do It My Way

Each state uses different identification and assessment measures and makes its own decision regarding cut-off scores for both entering and exiting programs designed for English language learners.

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## Stages of Language Development

See handout



## Principles of Unbiased Assessment

- \* Assessments in English
- \* Native Language Assessments
- \* Language vs. Literacy Assessment

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## Framework for Nondiscriminatory Assessment

1. Assess and evaluate the learning environment
2. Assess and evaluate language proficiency
3. Assess and evaluate opportunity for learning
4. Assess and evaluate educationally relevant cultural and linguistic factors
5. Determine the need for language(s) of assessment
6. Use multiple assessments and assessment types

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Ortiz, S. 2001

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## Framework for Nondiscriminatory Assessment

7. Reduce bias in traditional testing practices
8. Evaluate and interpret the data within the context of the learning ecology
9. Link assessment to instruction and intervention
10. Assessment is always guided by the information needed

Ortiz, S. (2001). "Best Practices in School Psychology."

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# Using Assessments with Technical Adequacy

## Reliability

- 1) Alternate form
- 2) Test-retest
- 3) Inter-rater or inter-score

Salvia, Ysseldyke, & Bolton, (2006).

## Validity

- 1) Content
- 2) Criterion-Related
- 3) Construct

Assessments that are designed without the English language learner in mind are not as valid **OR** reliable for that population of students.

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# Valid and Reliable

In order to be valid, a test must be reliable.



If a test is reliable, validity is not guaranteed.

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# Appropriate Use of Assessments

## 1) Consider Student Variables:

- ★ Educational History
- ★ Quality of educational program
- ★ Language Development (L1 and L2)
- ★ Acculturation
- ★ Environment
- ★ Social Issues

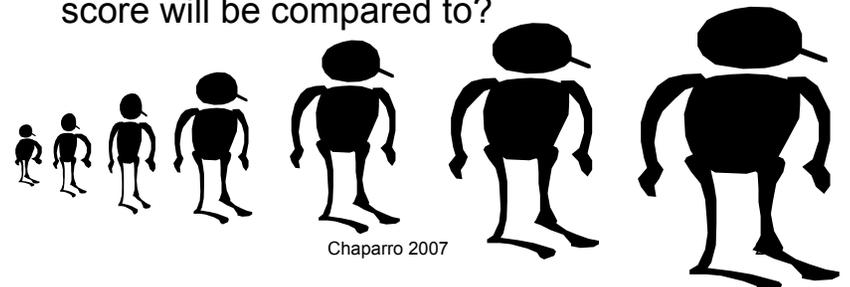
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# Appropriate Use of Assessments

## 2) Normative Samples:

- ✘ Are they representative of your students?
- ✘ How many students are in the normative sample that your student's score will be compared to?



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# Appropriate Use of Assessments



## 3) Language Development:

- ✘ Will scores represent the skill being tested or the English language skills acquired?
- ✘ Does the student have adequate English reading/writing skills to take the test in English?

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# Purpose of Assessments with ELL Students

- ✘ Provide baseline data
- ✘ Identification of status as limited English proficient
- ✘ Annual progress in ELP
- ✘ Achievement in content areas (includes progress monitoring of basic skills)

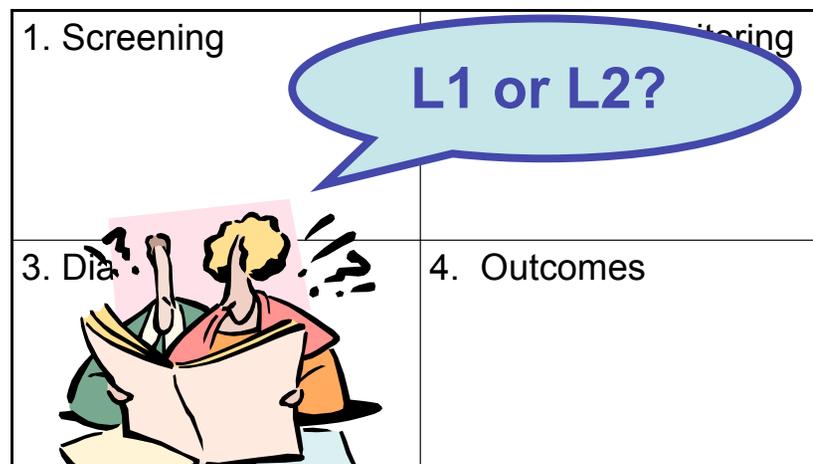
NCELA, Assessment and Accountability Guide, (2006).

## Basic Assessment Types for ELLs

Type of Assessment	Purpose	Source	Use of Outcomes	Reporting Uses	How Administered
<b>Program Placement Assessments and Language Proficiency Assessments</b>	To identify and place ELL students. (Language proficiency tests can also be used to demonstrate progress toward English-language proficiency.)	School or district-created Home Language Survey and commercial and/or customized language proficiency tests.	Provision of appropriate language services.	Information to parents about student placement, compliance with federal laws.	Individually administered by trained personnel.
<b>Content Mastery: Informal Assessments</b>	To monitor student progress.	Usually teacher-made; some commercial.	Grading, modifying instruction.	Report to parents on progress and strengths.	Group or individual, can be administered by teachers or instructional aides, or can be student self-assessments.
<b>Content Mastery: Formal or Standardized Assessments</b>	To monitor student progress, often used for "high-stakes" purposes.	Commercial, state, or district-developed.	To benchmark progress, compare student against others or a standard of achievement, program accountability, identify patterns in school/district, promotion or graduation.	Report to parents and community, report to funding sources, possible compliance with state or federal laws.	Usually group-administered by instructional personnel; training may be required to administer the test.

Source: National Association for Bilingual Education.

# Which tests are used with ELLs?



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## Principles of Unbiased Assessment

- \* Assessments in English
- \* Native Language Assessments
- \* Language vs. Literacy Assessment

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Don't Forget!

What is the purpose of this assessment?

What question are we trying to answer?

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## Purpose of Assessments with ELL Students

Assess in English

- Provide Baseline Data
- Identification of status as limited English proficient
- Annual progress in ELP
- Achievement in content areas (includes progress monitoring of basic skills)

NCELA, Assessment and Accountability Guide (2006).

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## When accommodations are appropriate?

Guiding Questions:

- ☛ Are accommodations used during daily instruction?
- ☛ If so, does the student need those accommodations to participate in the assessment?
- ☛ If so, which accommodations are appropriate to meet the student's needs?

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## Accommodations? Yes or No?

- Your halfway through administering the 3rd grade end of unit test and you notice Alejandro, a native Spanish speaker, has been resting his head on the desk for the last five minutes. Alejandro is a very fluent English speaker and reads just slightly below grade level.

## Accommodations? Yes or No?

- During the assessment a 2nd grader, Margaret, a student of Korean heritage keeps raising her hand to ask “What does that mean?” You know she was born in the United States and has been at your school since kindergarten. She read about 55 wcpm on the winter benchmark. Her grandmother is her primary caregiver.

## 4 Accommodation Types

- Presentation
- Response
- Setting
- Scheduling



## Common Accommodations

Presentation	Response	Setting	Scheduling
Proctor read aloud	Student dictates	Individual	Extended time
Interpreter	Native language	Small Group	Breaks
Direction clarification		Seat location	Beneficial time
Translation		Familiar proctor	

## Accommodation Questions

- ✓ Does the test-maker provide approved accommodations?
- ✓ Does the test-maker describe the accommodations and the appropriate use of them to maintain validity?
- ✓ Which student needs are addressed through the accommodations?

Source: National Council of La Raza

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## Which Accommodation is Appropriate?

- ✓ Start with Test Manual for Administration and Scoring
- ✓ Follow guidelines offered by State Department's of Education
- ✓ <http://www.education.umn.edu/nceo/TopicAreas/Accommodations/StatesAccomm.htm>

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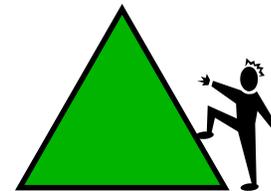
## Other Important Questions

- ✓ Which tests are required by the state?
- ✓ Which tests are required by the district?
- ✓ What guidelines are offered for choosing an assessment?
- ✓ Which accommodations are approved for use with the assessments?

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## Unbiased Assessment Includes . . .



Triangulate  
the data

Use native  
language  
assessments  
when appropriate

Hasta  
pronto

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## Principles of Unbiased Assessment

- \* Assessments in English
- \* Native Language Assessments
- \* Language vs. Literacy Assessment

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## Purpose of Assessments with ELL Students

- Native Lang. Assess
  - Provide Baseline Data
  - Identification of status as limited English proficient
  - Annual progress in ELP
- Depends on Lang. of Instruction
  - \* Achievement in content areas (includes progress monitoring of basic skills)

NCELA, Assessment and Accountability Guide, (2006).  
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## Language of Instruction and Language of Assessment

The problem:

An achievement test can become a language test when a student doesn't have adequate ELP

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## Language of Instruction and Language of Assessment

The solution:

There's not an easy answer.

- No statistical evidence to stay how fluent a student must be in order to test their knowledge and not their language
- Development of tests in other languages has been slow
- One test in two different languages does not necessarily measure the same concept

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## Language of Instruction and Language of Assessment

### Consider:

- If a student has not been instructed in their native language they have not acquired academic language.
- Language Dominance
- Language Proficiency

## Interpreters

- Practice and review materials to be discussed
- Allow interpreter to ask questions before parent and student meetings
- Encourage interpreters to ask questions

## During the Interpretation Process

- Speak in short simple sentences
- Avoid idioms, metaphors, and slang
- Avoid jargon, use specific and clear language
- Give interpreter time to translate each message
- Look and speak to the parent or student directly
- Allow extra time

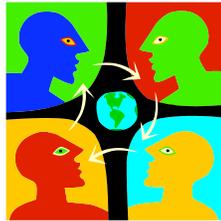
## Interpretation “No No”

- Do not under any circumstances carry on a side conversation while the interpreter is speaking or while the parent or child is speaking!!!
  - Adds distraction for interpreter
  - Shows lack of interest in what parent or student has to say



# Test Administrators

- Native language assessors should have training in the terms, procedures, and rationale of the assessment process and the evaluation instruments.



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# Administrators of the Native Language Assessments

Be familiar with:

- Ethical guidelines for interpreters
- Confidentiality guidelines
- Purpose and restrictions of standardized testing

For high-stakes testing a school psychologist or special education teacher should be present during testing.

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# Principles of Unbiased Assessment

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## Checklist 1.1

### Choosing an Appropriate Language Proficiency Test Instrument

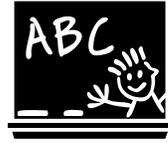
- What is the length of time needed to administer the assessment?
- What training, if any, is required for the test proctor? What type of training does the test manufacturer provide and at what cost?
- Is the assessment available in the languages spoken by students in the school?
- Is the test culturally responsive for the learners who will be taking it? For example, are there items on the test that would be easily understood by some ELLs but not by all of the ELLs who will be taking the test?
- What are the costs for purchasing, implementing, and scoring the assessment?
- Will the test publisher sell the test directly to the charter school, or does the charter school have to go through the local school district to obtain copies of the test? Most test manufacturers require an educator to sign documents stating that s/he will make sure that the test is kept in a secure location and will only be used for the purposes for which it was intended.
- How easy is it to order and reorder the assessment?
- What are the assessment scoring options?
- How many forms or versions of the test are available? (Students should not be reassessed or retested with the same test instrument. Whenever possible, a different form should be used.)

Source: Guerrero, M., and Ann Vecchio, *Handbook of English Language Proficiency Tests*, 1995.

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<b>Content Mastery: Formal or Standardized Assessments</b>	To monitor student progress, often used for "high-stakes" purposes.	Commercial, state, or district-developed.	To benchmark progress, compare student against others or a standard of achievement, program accountability, identify patterns in school/district, promotion or graduation.	Report to parents and community, report to funding sources, possible compliance with state or federal laws.	Usually group-administered by instructional personnel; training may be required to administer the test.

Source: National Association for Bilingual Education.



## Language and Literacy

### Language

- Identify students as LEP
- Baseline
- Language Services
- English language proficiency

### Literacy

- Identify skill status
- Baseline
- Literacy instruction
- Taught literacy skills performance

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## Different Strokes for Different Folks



Different Tests for Different Purposes

Language Assessment vs. Literacy Assessments

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Your Building's  
ELL Assessment Capacity

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## Developing a Plan



Provide Appropriate Instruction

Positively Impact Student Learning

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## Your Team

- Who will be the in-house experts?
- Who knows the assessments and can answer questions about them?
- Who works closely with many of the ELL students at your school?



Wait a minute . . . this sounds like a job for . . .

**Building Leadership Team!!!**

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## Establishing Your Plan Step 1: Determine Your Needs

Assessment needs:

- Which assessments are available for your school's use?
- Are we giving the right assessment to answer the given question?
- Is there a need to purchase additional assessments?



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## Establishing Your Plan Step 2: Create Assessment Plan

- PD
- Assessment Tools
- Schedules
- Personnel
- Record-keeping system

**Include School Psychologists, Speech and Language Pathologists, and Special Education Teachers**

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## Establishing Your Plan Step 3: Train Assessment Personnel

- Who has been trained on the various measures?
- What training is available?
- Is everyone knowledgeable about appropriate accommodations?
- Are the tests being administered according to standardization?



## Establishing Your Plan Step 4: Collect, Manage, Interpret, Utilize the Data

- Make informed educational decisions
- Aggregate vs. Disaggregate
- Assists in goal setting
- Use it or Lose it!



Unused Data = Lost Opportunity

## Case Study



Alberto (Berto)  
Enrolled Spring of 2nd Grade  
Oaxaca, Mexico  
New Arrival



## Information to Gather

- ✓ Home Language
  - Berto and his family speak some Spanish but mostly Amuzgo a language spoken by people from Western Oaxaca.
- ✓ Family
  - Berto lives with his parents and his grandparents.
- ✓ Cultural Factors
  - His entire family is unable to read or write in either Spanish or Amuzgo
- ✓ Educational History
  - Berto has never attended school



## Tests Administered - LANGUAGE

- Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (2001) BICS and CALP in English and Spanish
- Includes picture vocabulary, verbal analogies, letter-word identification, and dictation.

### Spanish:

- CALP 1 = very limited
- BICS = 2 limited

### English:

- CALP 1 = very limited
- BICS 1 = limited

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## Tests Administered - IQ

- Due to lack of fluency in either language and because we did not have a measure of Amuzgo we decided to administer a Universal Non-verbal Intelligence Tests (UNIT)
- SPSY determined that the Berto has average processing skills and above average short term memory skills for students his age. Berto has no intellectual or cognitive limitations to his learning.
- Eligible for SPED articulation services



## Tests Administered - READING

### Fluency Measures

- Zero on ORF in both Spanish and English
- Survey Level Assessment (back tracked)
- Berto scored zero on all fluency based measures in both Spanish and English all the way through kindergarten

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## Instructional Plan

- The grade level team along with specialists met to discuss the plan.
- It was determined that Berto needed intensive instructional support in reading but also in English Language instruction and articulation.
- Let's talk about his schedule.

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## Tests Administered - Progress Monitoring

- Fluency Based Measures
  - Phonemes > Nonsense Words > Oral Reading
- Informal Teacher Testing
  - Taught sounds
  - Taught sight words
  - Taught vocabulary
- Intervention curriculum testing
  - End of unit tests & placement tests
  - Phonics screener



## Berto's Background Information

- Difficult time adjusting to school
- End of 2nd grade was lost to many days of absence and when he was in school he was crying and at times non-responsive
- Parents came in for a meeting at the end of the year - Dad shared some of their history
- Teachers started following year with renewed dedication

## Example of Informal Teacher Assessment



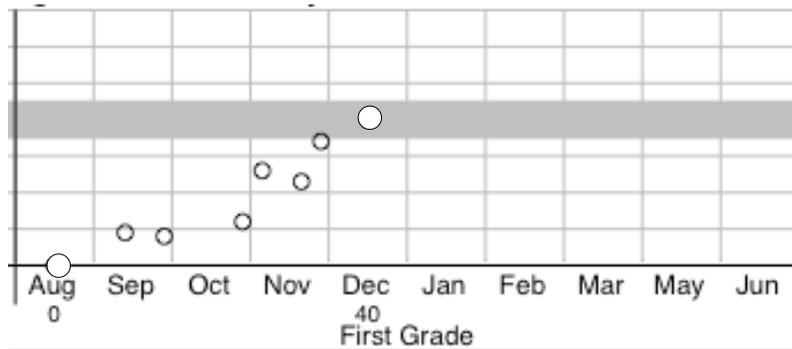
	9/17	9/18	9/19	9/20	9/21
<b>REVIEW</b>					
m	+	+	+	+	+
a	-	-	+	+	+
s	+	+	+	+	+
d	+	+	+	+	+
<b>NEW</b>					
f	-	+	-	+	+
b	+	+	+	+	+
c	-	+	-	+	+
t	-	-	+	+	+

## Example of Informal Teacher Assessment

	9/17	9/18	9/19	9/20	9/21
<b>Irregular</b>					
was	+	+	+	+	+
pull	-	-	+	+	+
put	+	+	+	+	+
walk	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Regular</b>					
last	-	+	-	+	+
ask	+	+	+	+	+
sand	-	+	-	+	+
him	-	-	+	+	+



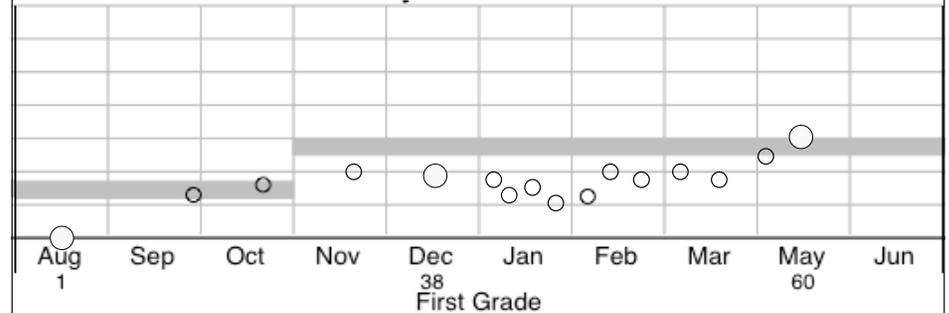
# Standardized PM - Phonemic Segmentation



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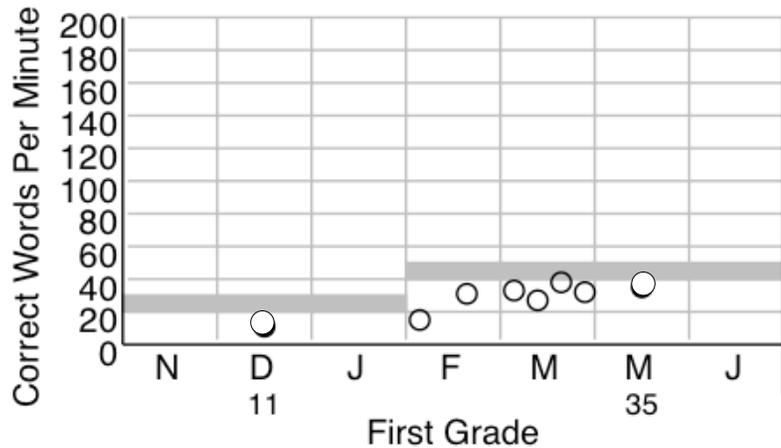
# Standardized PM - Nonsense Words (CVC)



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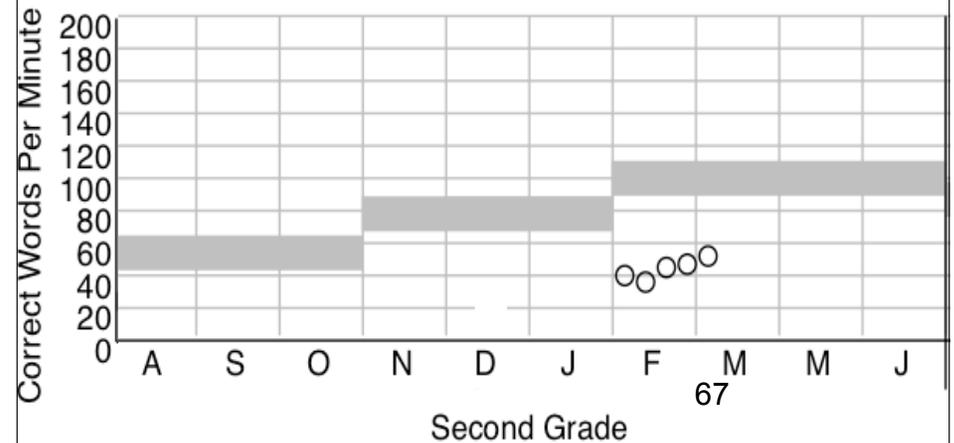
# Standardized PM - Oral Reading



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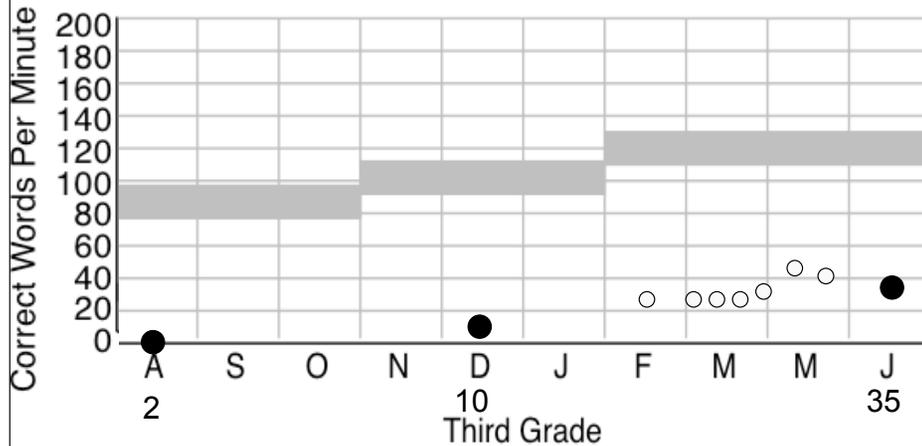
# Standardized Progress Monitoring - Oral Reading 2nd Grade



Second Grade

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## Grade Level PM Oral Reading



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## Berto's Team



Collaboration and coordination:

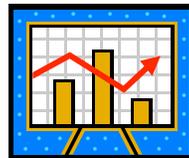
- Classroom Teacher (sent informal Ax daily to other instructors)
- Reading Specialist (did standardized PM and sent results in email to other 2 instructors with graphs)
- ELL Specialist (weekly sent language objectives to other teachers)
- GL Team - Frequently spoke of Berto and helped to problem-solve

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## The Plan for Berto



- Next Year - 4th grade
- Instructional plan will include intervention comprehensive reading program
- Increased focus on vocabulary and language development - most likely impacted growth in oral reading this year

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## Resource

- Rhodes, Ochoa, Ortiz, (2005). "Assessing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students: A Practical Guide." Guilford Press.
- <http://www.colorincolorado.org/> - Companion website to Reading Rockets, great resources for teachers and parents.
- <http://www.nwrac.org/pub/hot/assessment.html> - Northwest Regional Lab, Paper on ELL and Assessment (1998)

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## Resources

- <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/> - National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs
- <http://www.ldonline.org> - Brief articles on ELL and Special Education Interface.
- <http://ceee.gwu.edu/Lit/LiteracyGuides.html> - Tutor training manual for free download for parent and community volunteers
- <http://www.buros.unl.edu/buros/jsp/search.jsp> - Offers technical adequacy information on tests

## Thank You!

- Thank you for your work in the schools and for your participation today!
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- 541.346.1608
- WRRFTAC

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