

ESL Levels

Levels

1. **Beginning Level Basic Communicative Skills**
 2. **Lower Intermediate Level - Increasing Communicative Skills**
 3. **Upper Intermediate Level - Increased Understanding and Communicative**
 4. **Advanced Level - Confident Communicative Skills**
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Beginning Level Basic Communicative Skills

Speaking

English learners at this level can perform simple tasks in English such as ordering food in a restaurant with the help of visual aids, as well as complete simple transactions in shops. Learners can also provide basic explanations about themselves such as stating where they are from, their marital status, their current employment status, etc. Learners at this level can respond in many basic situations, but find difficulty in expressing and / or inquiring about further detail. Learners have noticeable pronunciation difficulties that can at times hinder their ability to be understood by others.

Writing

Learners at this level can fill in basic forms and complete simple written tasks such as writing a description of their daily routines, or completing a simple e-mail requesting or providing basic information such as meeting place, time, etc. Learners at this level tend to use simple sentences that lack complex structures such as clauses, generally with a lack of linking language. They also tend to make basic mistakes in tense usage even in basic narrations.

Reading

Learners at this level can scan for specific information such as TV schedule times, use bus schedules, etc. Learners have difficulties reading extended texts, but can generally understand the gist of very simple reading tasks.

Listening

English learners at this level still have great difficulty in understanding anything more than specific information such as time, location and topic. They can understand simple conversations and listening selections after multiple repetition to complete in-class tasks.

Lower Intermediate Level - Increasing Communicative Skills

Speaking

Lower intermediate level learners can use their English to complete most simple daily tasks such as asking for more information in shops, asking for recommendations in restaurants, asking for assistance in a hotel, etc. At work, English learners can provide basic information about tasks as well as ask for clarification. Learners still have difficulties in expressing extended opinions or using a wide range of vocabulary and structures to dig further into specifics. Pronunciation does not cause incomprehension, but can still provide difficult for interlocutors.

Writing

Learners at this level can write simple letters and e-mails explaining their current situations, as well as describe past events. Tense usage, while still not fluent, is generally clear in terms of past, present and future. Lower intermediate level learners can write some more extended passages, for example asking details about a certain topic, but will use only basic linking language in their written communications.

Reading

Learners at this level can read simple texts, understand gist of newspaper or magazine articles, but still have difficulties with detail. They can understand most service sector texts such as menus, bus and train schedules, brochures, etc. without much difficulty. They have begun to read more extended materials, but still have difficulties with vocabulary and deeper comprehension.

Listening

English learners at this level can deal with most basic situations such as asking for directions, responding to simple questions at work, etc. without having to ask for much repetition. In these common situations, they expect certain vocabulary and phrases and are familiar with usage. They still experience difficulties when listening to the radio or watching TV, but generally can understand the gist of the topics discussed in these formats.

Upper Intermediate Level - Increased Understanding and Communicative Competence

Speaking

Upper intermediate level English learners have gained more confidence and can deal with a wide range of speaking situations. They generally have begun to become extremely proficient in expressing their opinions on topics they find interesting, or when speaking about their work. They can generally express their opinions on most topics, and ask more detailed questions when engaged in conversation. At work, they feel confident in their abilities to contribute to the conversation. Pronunciation only occasionally causes comprehension difficulties for others.

Writing

English learners at this level can perform most basic tasks with confidence. They have begun to use more complex structures and appropriate linking language in more extended passages. In academic and work situations, they are able to write more extended

passages such as short essays, or one page memos.

Reading

Learners at the upper intermediate level begin to explore their own interests in more extended reading passages, or even in short stories and novels. They still need to use a dictionary from time to time, but can increasingly learn new vocabulary through context. They are proficient at skimming and scanning, and perform well in most comprehension activities.

Listening

Learners feel more comfortable with longer listening periods, even if they do not understand every word or phrase. Their grasp of the gist of most conversations help them understand longer formats such as movies, longer interviews etc. They have very few difficulties understanding and participating in one to one conversations.

Advanced Level - Confident Communicative Skills

Speaking

Advanced level English learners feel comfortable participating in most everyday conversations and can express themselves with ease and provide detail. They may feel challenged in situations where they are called upon to speak in public, but feel capable of doing so. At work, they can easily participate in every aspect of meetings, conference calls, etc. Their pronunciation only rarely gets in the way of comprehension.

Writing

English learners at this level feel comfortable writing extended letters and e-mails, as well as writing business reports and shorter essays. They may still need proof-reading help from time to time, but are capable of complex structures and use a wide range of linking language.

Reading

Learners at the advanced level enjoy reading extensively in their own interests areas, and will sometimes read books in English for their own pleasure. When they come across challenging vocabulary, they have little problem in understanding the contextual meaning.

Listening

Learners can comprehend almost any conversation or entertainment format. They only rarely have problems when listening to very topic specific areas in which have little competence. They have no problem understanding others in both one to one conversations, and in more complex situations such as dinner with a number of friends, or business meetings.