

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Forewords	7
Acknowledgments	10
A Closer Look at English Language Learners	11
Language Proficiency	15
Measuring Reading Proficiency	17
Language Assessment Resources	20
How to Use This Book	24
About the Author	31
Language Arts Performance-Based Assessments	33
Language Arts Performance-Based Assessments Introduction	34
Language Arts Performance-Based Assessments Grades K–2 Overview	35
Language Arts Assessment Plans	
Oral Assessment: Retell a Story	36
Written Assessment: Identify Story Elements and Describe a Character	44
Language Arts Performance-Based Assessments Grades 3–5 Overview	53
Language Arts Assessment Plans	
Oral Assessment A: Retell a Fairy Tale	54
Oral Assessment B: Compare Fables	62
Written Assessment: Respond to Questions and Write a Personal Narrative ...	70
Mathematics Performance-Based Assessments	79
Mathematics Performance-Based Assessments Introduction	80
Mathematics Performance-Based Assessments Grades K–2 Overview	81
Mathematics Assessment Plans	
Oral Assessment: Measure and Compare the Length of Objects	82
Written Assessment: Solve and Explain Word Problems	91
Mathematics Performance-Based Assessments Grades 3–5 Overview	102
Mathematics Assessment Plans	
Oral Assessment A: Describe and Compare Fractions	103
Oral Assessment B: Ask and Respond to Questions about Bar Graphs	114
Written Assessment: Measure Perimeter and Area	123

Table of Contents *(cont.)*

Social Studies Performance-Based Assessments	135
Social Studies Performance-Based Assessments Introduction	136
Social Studies Performance-Based Assessments Grades K–2 Overview	137
Social Studies Assessment Plans	
Oral Assessment: Compare Places We Live	138
Written Assessment: Describe Cultural Events	151
Social Studies Performance-Based Assessments Grades 3–5 Overview	160
Social Studies Assessment Plans	
Oral Assessment: Compare the Similarities and Differences of Two Groups	161
Written Assessment: Sequence Important Events for a Historical Figure	172
Science Performance-Based Assessments	181
Science Performance-Based Assessments Introduction	182
Science Performance-Based Assessments Grades K–2 Overview	184
Science Assessment Plans	
Oral Assessment: Identify Information and Describe the Seasons	185
Written Assessment: Find the Main Idea and Write a Letter	196
Science Performance-Based Assessments Grades 3–5 Overview	204
Science Assessment Plans	
Oral Assessment: Follow and Explain the Sequence of an Experiment	205
Written Assessment: Read about an Animal Life Cycle and Write to Sequence Information	217
Appendix A: References Cited	227
Appendix B: Sample Instructional Resources	232
Appendix C: Contents of the Digital Resource CD	240

A Closer Look at English Language Learners

Over the last decade, there has been tremendous growth in the number of students from diverse language and cultural backgrounds attending schools across the United States. In some cases, these linguistically and culturally diverse students came to the United States from other countries where English may not have been spoken as the primary language. In other cases, these students may have been born in the United States to parents that speak a primary language other than English in the home. Current statistics by the National Center for Education Statistics (2012) indicate that English language learners have a huge impact on schools across the United States:

- As of the 2009–2010 school year, the five million English language learners in public schools represented around 10 percent of the total prekindergarten through grade 12 enrollment in schools in the United States.
- From 1993 to 2003, the number of English language learners increased at a rate of 84 percent in comparison to the 14 percent increase in the general student population.
- The largest number of English language learners live in the state of California (almost 1.8 million students). Arizona, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas all have over 100,000 English language learners currently enrolled in local public schools.
- Over 19 states have experienced an increase in their population of English language learners, with about 200 percent growth overall.
- There is a large concentration of English language learners at the elementary school level, with about 67 percent of the population enrolled at this level.
- Of the 240 languages represented, the most frequently spoken languages include Spanish (79.2 percent), Vietnamese (2 percent), Hmong (1.6 percent), Cantonese (1 percent), and Korean (1 percent).
- Latinos (Spanish-speaking residents) are officially the largest minority group in the United States, with over 46 million residents, confirmed by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2008.

These populations of culturally and linguistically diverse students are steadily growing across the nation, impacting the need for educators to adapt their instructional and assessment practices to meet the linguistic and academic needs of the students in this group.

A Closer Look at English Language Learners *(cont.)*

Understanding the Purpose of English Language Development Instruction

Over the past several years, two distinct perspectives on English language development (ELD) instruction have emerged: *language learning* vs. *language acquisition*. On the one hand, language learning theory outlines that language should be systematically and explicitly taught (McLaughlin 1985). On the other hand, language-acquisition theory emphasizes that language is acquired naturally in the same way that students learn their first language (Krashen and Terrell 1983).

Those educators who embrace the natural language acquisition approach do not teach language explicitly in their classrooms. Instead, they provide cooperative learning opportunities for English language learners to learn from one another. In addition to this, some states have adopted policies to support this approach and have eliminated language-support programs for English language learners, claiming that language development occurs naturally across the content curriculum. However, there is significant evidence to prove that this natural language acquisition approach does not provide opportunities to develop sufficient language skills in English to support the academic success of the English language learners receiving instruction via this approach (Dutro and Moran 2003). This is especially true now, given the academic rigor of the Common Core State Standards (Haynes 2012).

Jim Cummins (1979) established the notion of the different kinds of language, outlining the distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). He emphasized how important it is for English language learners to develop language skills to be able to communicate for both social and academic purposes in a variety of settings. BICS is defined as language that is highly contextualized, such as with face-to-face conversations, which allows students to depend heavily on visual cues and facial expressions. CALP is defined as language that tends to be decontextualized, such as with presentations/lectures in a classroom or information in a textbook with abstract concepts and few nonverbal cues. He stated that English language learners need to acquire CALP to gain greater facility with the decontextualized academic language of the classroom so that they can effectively participate in classroom discourse and access the content curriculum.

Dutro and Moran (2003) expanded on Cummins's conceptualization of cognitive academic language proficiency and connected language learning to various cognitive tasks, including explaining, inferring, analyzing, comparing and contrasting, and drawing conclusions. They also defined the different forms of academic language that all students must learn to master in the classroom, including the language of formal writing, the language of text structures when reading, grammatical features linked to parts of speech, and academic vocabulary. They posited that English language learners must learn to apply their knowledge of language, demonstrate comprehension, and develop automaticity when speaking and writing with increasing levels of complexity for a variety of purposes.

A Closer Look at English Language Learners *(cont.)*

Dutro and Moran (2003) also highlighted that educators could maximize the academic success of English language learners if they implemented a comprehensive approach to teaching English language development instruction by providing direct language instruction on a daily basis as well as language learning opportunities across the content curriculum. It was noted that separate English language development instructional blocks with lessons that focus on explicitly teaching grammar, the function of language, and vocabulary have been shown to lead to the greatest academic gains for English language learners (O'Brien 2007) as they develop fluency and facility with academic language in English. Wong Fillmore and Snow (2007) also emphasized the importance of ensuring that all teachers build their competencies to gain a deeper understanding of how learning language learning impacts English language learners across the content curriculum.

Outlining Effective English Language Development Instruction

To improve academic outcomes for English language learners, teachers should design instruction and assessments that provide opportunities for English language learners to have a greater depth of understanding of the linguistic forms and functions of language in the classroom setting. According to Cummins (1984), students need to be provided with opportunities to practice both cognitively challenging and contextualized language learning to acquire the academic language needed to promote academic success.

In light of this, English language development instruction should take place on a daily basis to address the developmental linguistic needs of students. This will ensure that these students develop their language skills as they learn to interact and respond to language stimuli in the context of the classroom across the curriculum (Dutro and Moran 2003). Dutro and Moran outline three approaches that should be integrated during instruction to address the English language development needs of English language learners across the curriculum:

- **Systematic language instruction:** Specialized instruction designed to teach language skills in sequential format based on the needs of English language learners at varying proficiency levels.
- **Front-loading academic language:** Language instruction occurring across the content curriculum to preteach the language skills that relate to specific content in order to address upcoming language demands.
- **Maximizing the teachable moment:** Language instruction occurring across the content curriculum to provide opportunities to deepen students' understanding of the application of language skill in various academic contexts.

A Closer Look at English Language Learners *(cont.)*

Using these approaches to address the language development needs of English language learners will help ensure that their linguistic and academic needs are met throughout the school day.

During systematic language instruction, teachers need to focus on teaching the academic language that English language learners need to demonstrate comprehension or convey a message in the language skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Gottlieb (2006) and Scarcella (2003), the language components that must be addressed include the following:

- Demonstrating comprehension and use of academic vocabulary and language patterns
- Applying knowledge of linguistic complexity, organization, and cohesion in oral or written discourse (length and variety of sentences in context)
- Demonstrating comprehension and use of the English sound system (phonology), language structures (syntax), and the meaning of language (semantics/morphology) in context

English language learners must gain facility and fluency with each of these language components to become competent communicators in English in various academic settings.

Language Proficiency

Why Assess for Language Proficiency?

Across the nation, English language learners are being assessed for a variety of purposes. According to O'Malley and Valdez Pierce (1996), large-scale and classroom-based language assessments help educators identify students for specialized language-support programs, monitor the progress that students are making toward developing language proficiency in English, and decide how and when to transition students out of specialized language support programs. When assessment and instruction do not work together to address the linguistic needs of English language learners, this leads to inappropriate identification, placement, and monitoring of student progress, resulting in long-term failure for English language learners (Cummins 1984).

To adhere to federal mandates, all states must identify measures and establish processes for monitoring the progress that English language learners are making toward attaining proficiency in English on an annual basis (Alliance for Excellent Education 2012). The language supports provided to English language learners are designed to help these students acquire the academic English needed to be successful across the content curriculum. The language support programs are often referred to as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs.

English language learners usually enter one of these language support programs when a district's or state's English language proficiency (ELP) placement assessment determines the student's eligibility to receive language-support services to acquire English as a new language. Once students are enrolled in the ESL program, teachers need to monitor the progress that students are making toward acquiring English as a new language.

Even though English language learners participate in annual testing each year to satisfy federal mandates, teachers also need to collect formative ELP data to measure students' progress toward attaining language proficiency in the four language skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing to ensure that students are making consistent progress toward learning the academic language needed to access the content curriculum.

One way that teachers can accomplish this task is by using ongoing formative assessments on a regular basis to:

- Document individual language proficiency over time for English language learners
- Determine the extent to which the ELP standards are being attained
- Reflect on language data to adjust instruction
- Encourage students to engage in self-reflection and self-assessments
- Collect language samples in a systematic way in the four language-skill areas

According to Marzano (2006), formative assessments should be used to provide feedback to students about their progress, motivate students to progress toward learning goals, provide formative data that describe how students are performing in relation to goals, and provide frequent and ongoing data to measure students' progress.

Language Proficiency (cont.)

Understanding Formative Language Proficiency Assessments

Effective formative language assessments enable teachers to monitor students' progress toward attaining language proficiency in English during instruction. Well-designed and deployed assessment procedures are essential to meeting the needs of English language learners as they develop proficiency in English (Valdez Pierce and O'Malley 1992).

There is a growing interest in the use of performance assessments to ensure that learning is connected to the critical-thinking skills and problem solving needed to be successful in both classroom and future career settings. This will also be critical as school systems shift to fully implementing the Common Core State Standards and students are expected to use language to make arguments and make inferences from more complex texts (Maxwell 2012). Many educators believe that formative assessments provide more clarity when they closely resemble the instructional activities that students encounter in the classroom. These kinds of assessments have been referred to as *performance-based* or *authentic assessments*. The information gathered from these assessments is most useful when language learning has been integrated into the learning of content skills and processes as opposed to teaching and assessing language skills in isolation (O'Malley and Valdez Pierce 1996).

According to Feuer and Fulton (1993), performance-based assessments consist of any kind of assessment in which the students are being asked to participate in complex and significant tasks that demonstrate the use of skills involving real-life problem solving. Some of the characteristics of performance-based assessments include the following:

- Developing tasks that integrate different language skills
- Designing assessment opportunities that provide in-depth knowledge about students' control of and facility with language
- Providing tasks that are complex and have multiple solutions
- Ensuring that tasks are meaningful and challenging and reflect a real-world context
- Having students use critical-thinking skills when constructing responses to open-ended questions
- Having students construct a response when engaged in a task orally or in writing
- Evaluating student products and performances, using rubrics

(O'Malley and Valdez Pierce 1996; Ainsworth and Viegut 2006)

It is also important that teachers have a systematic approach for collecting student language samples to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate progress over time (O'Malley and Valdez Pierce 1996). This can be accomplished by creating a portfolio for each student (see [portfolio.pdf](#) on the Digital Resource CD). Student self-assessments should also be a key element of the teachers' assessment system to ensure that students become an integral part of this process and learn how to regulate their own learning (Paris and Ayres 1994).

Language Arts Performance-Based Assessments Grades 3–5 Overview

English language learners should have the opportunity to practice using language during instruction before being expected to complete identified assessments. Students should also receive feedback as the teacher gathers formative assessment data during each lesson.

Before administering these formative assessments, conduct English language development (ELD) lessons to explicitly teach the academic language functions, language structures, and vocabulary using poetry, literary or informational texts, or other available instructional resources.

These assessment plans outline oral and written language assessments that have been identified for English language learners in grades 3–5. Note that these language assessments are intended to address the oral- and the written-language skills that English language learners will use in the context of language arts. Both listening and speaking skills have been integrated in the Oral Assessment, and both reading and writing skills have been integrated in the Written Assessment. The following table outlines the types of assessments provided in this resource along with descriptions of the content of these assessments.

Formative Language Assessment	Assessment A: Retell a Fairy Tale	Listening	Speaking
		After listening to a read-aloud of a fairy tale or legend, the student will retell the events of the story in sequential order, using pictures or a graphic organizer.	After completing a graphic organizer about a fairy tale or legend, the student will retell the events in the story and describe the action of the main character, using a graphic organizer and the text.
	Assessment B: Compare Fables	After listening to two fables, the student will compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the characters in the story, using a graphic organizer.	After completing a graphic organizer about two fables, the student will present the similarities and differences between the characters in the story.
	Written Assessment: Respond to Questions and Write a Personal Narrative	Reading	Writing
		The student will read a text about a character's personal experience and will respond to questions about the story.	The student will write a personal narrative about an important family event or personal experience and create an illustration about the experience.

Oral Assessment A: Retell a Fairy Tale

Preparation

The following chart outlines the concepts and topics that English language learners should be familiar with in the context of the language arts classroom. It also outlines sample language objectives that might be used to frame lessons during ELD instruction before the performance-based language assessments are administered with students. In addition, sample instructional resources that might be used during ELD instruction to teach the identified concepts and topics can be found in Appendix B (page 232).

Concepts and Topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify elements of a story • Retell fairy tales and legends • Identify the theme and lesson evident in the fairy tale or legend • Make inferences when reading • Predict the events in a story • Share cultural influences on familiar stories • Compare the similarities and differences in fairy tales and legends
Sample Language Objectives
<p>Prior to administering this assessment, students should have the following opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make predictions about the character’s actions in a story in future or future continuous tenses • Read leveled texts and ask and respond to questions about the setting, characters, and events in the story, using adjectives and past tense verbs in statements • Describe the point of view of two similar fairy tales in different cultural contexts in the past tense using pictures and graphic organizers • Describe the setting and characters in different stories, using adjectives in correct word order • Make inferences about how the main character’s actions impact the events of the story, using vivid verbs in a variety of verb tenses in statements • Compare two characters in a fairy tale and describe their similarities and differences, using adjectives and conjunctions in statements • Act out a fairy tale in a reader’s theater and apply knowledge of nonverbal cues, expression, pronunciation, and fluency in context

Oral Assessment A: Retell a Fairy Tale *(cont.)*

Overview

During this oral assessment, students practice the listening and speaking skills needed to demonstrate understanding and communicate effectively with adults and peers in the context of the language arts classroom. This assessment will have students retell a story after listening to a read-aloud of a fairy tale. This oral assessments helps students apply their language skills in an authentic way.

Materials

- Level-appropriate fairy tale that connects to the different cultural contexts of students
- *Retell a Fairy Tale Response Sheet* (page 57)
- *Fairy Tale Speaking Checklist* (page 58)
- *Retell a Fairy Tale Performance Record* (page 59)
- *Retell a Fairy Tale Listening and Speaking Rubric* (pages 60–61)

Assessment Focus

Academic Language Function

Retell the events in a story and describe the actions of the main character

General Academic Vocabulary

- *beginning*
- *describe*
- *first*
- *happen*
- *last*
- *middle*
- *next*
- *second*
- *then*
- *third*

Specialized Academic Vocabulary

- *characters*
- *setting*
- *story*

Language Structures

Using transition words, adjectives, verbs in the simple past and past continuous verb tenses, and prepositional phrases in statements

Oral Assessment A: Retell a Fairy Tale *(cont.)*

Directions

1. Read aloud the selected fairy tale to students.
2. Tell students, “Today, you are going to listen to a fairy tale (or legend) and complete a graphic organizer. Then, you are going to retell the events in the story by using the graphic organizer.” Distribute the *Retell a Fairy Tale Response Sheet* to students.
3. Distribute the *Fairy Tale Speaking Checklist* to students. Explain to students that as they work, they will use their checklist as a guide of what is expected from them.
4. Have students complete their *Retell a Fairy Tale Response Sheet* independently using the selected text.
5. When students have finished their response sheets, assess them individually by reading the prompts on the *Retell a Fairy Tale Performance Record* to each student and record his or her response. Ask each student to show the graphic organizer and retell the story in his or her own words. Using the text, encourage students to describe the actions of the main character and find corresponding pictures as they retell the fairy tale. It is important to see how much language each student provides without prompting. If students respond with one-word answers, use prompt statements such as “Tell me more...” or “Tell me in a sentence...” If two or more prompts are required, mark an *NR* for *no response* on the performance sheet.
6. Use the *Retell a Fairy Tale Listening and Speaking Rubric* to assign a language performance level (LPL) on the *Retell a Fairy Tale Performance Record* for each section of the assessment. Samples of student responses for each level have been included to help determine the LPL of student responses.
7. Archive this assessment in each student’s language portfolio and review and discuss the areas of strength and weakness that are noted for each student during the assessment.
8. If necessary, retest students using this formative assessment with a different text within a given grading period.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Retell a Fairy Tale Response Sheet

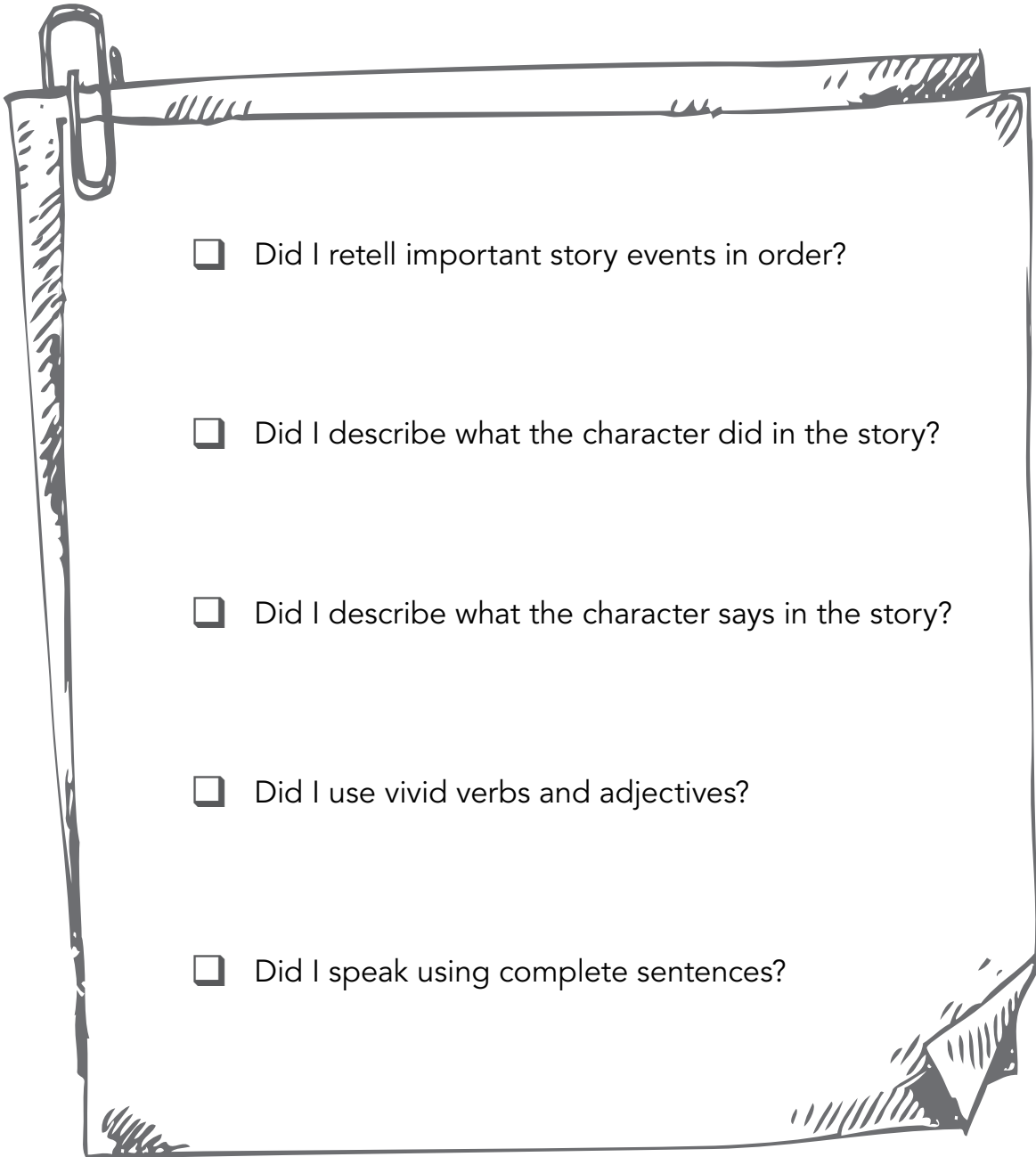
Directions: Draw a picture or write a sentence to show or tell about the events of the story in order.

1	2	3
4	5	6

Name: _____ Date: _____

Fairy Tale Speaking Checklist

Directions: Use the guide below to help you. Check the boxes when you answer the question.



- Did I retell important story events in order?
- Did I describe what the character did in the story?
- Did I describe what the character says in the story?
- Did I use vivid verbs and adjectives?
- Did I speak using complete sentences?

Retell a Fairy Tale Performance Record

Student Name: _____

Current Proficiency Level: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Record the student's response to each set of prompts. Then, use the *Retell a Fairy Tale Listening and Speaking Rubric* to assign the language performance level (LPL) for each section.

Prompts	Student Response	Language Performance Level (LPL)
Listening		
Identify the events of the fairy tale after listening to the fairy tale read aloud.	Student identified _____ events in the fairy tale correctly.	Listening LPL: _____
Speaking		
Retell the story to me. Tell me the story using the pictures. Who was the story about? Where did the story take place? What happened first (next, last)?	Student responses:	Speaking LPL: _____
Describe the actions of the main character. What did the main character do first (next, last)?	Student responses:	Speaking LPL: _____

Retell a Fairy Tale

Listening and Speaking Rubric

Directions: Use this rubric to assign a language performance level (LPL) for each task in this assessment. Samples of student responses for each level have been included to help determine the LPL of student responses. The table below will provide you with an example of how you can assess each student.

Task	Beginner/Early Intermediate	Intermediate/Early Advanced	Advanced
<p>Retell the fables (e.g., characters, setting, events)</p>	<p>Retells the events of the fable using pictures and labels on a graphic organizer</p> <p>Sample responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The wolf came.</i> • <i>Wolf want eat.</i> • <i>The pig run go house.</i> • <i>The wolf run for pig.</i> • <i>The wolf in hot water.</i> • <i>Wolf run away.</i> • <i>The cat was looking for a home.</i> • <i>The cat saw a house and sat at the door.</i> 	<p>Retells the events of the fable in sequence using the pictures and phrases on a graphic organizer</p> <p>Sample responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Then, the monk saw the little cat and took him inside.</i> • <i>Next, the people came to the place to pray, but they didn't have a lot of money.</i> • <i>The cat and the monk did a lot of things together.</i> • <i>A warlord (samurai or soldier) was in the rain, under a tree.</i> • <i>He came closer to look at the cat.</i> • <i>The tree did not hit the warlord.</i> • <i>The warlord fixed the temple and took his family to the place.</i> • <i>It was cold and the cat was looking for a new home.</i> 	<p>Retells the events of the fable in sequence using sentences on a graphic organizer</p> <p>Sample responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The cat was standing in the snow, and he looked down and saw an old temple.</i> • <i>The cat sat on the porch in front of the door with his paw up.</i> • <i>He was waiting at the door when the monk came and took him inside.</i> • <i>The monk thought that he was fortunate to be visited by a Japanese Bobtail cat.</i> • <i>The monk was worried because his temple was falling apart, and the people who came were poor and didn't have a lot of money.</i> • <i>The two became good friends and helped each other.</i> • <i>One night, a warlord came and was saved by the cat when a tree fell.</i> • <i>The warlord was grateful and helped the monk fix the temple.</i>

Retell a Fairy Tale

Listening and Speaking Rubric *(cont.)*

Task	Beginner/Early Intermediate	Intermediate/Early Advanced	Advanced
<p>Describe the actions of the main character</p>	<p>Describes the actions of the main character, using basic adjectives in words and phrases</p> <p>Sample responses:</p> <p>About the wolf:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Goes to the house of pig.</i> • <i>Knocks on the door.</i> • <i>Blows down house.</i> • <i>Climbs on the roof.</i> • <i>Falls in hot water.</i> • <i>Runs away.</i> 	<p>Describes the actions of the main character, using adjectives in simple sentences</p> <p>Sample responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The curious cat found a temple.</i> • <i>The lazy cat sits on the porch and waited.</i> • <i>The kind cat played with the monk and helped him.</i> 	<p>Describes the actions of the main character, using sequence words and colorful adjectives in compound or complex sentences</p> <p>Sample responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The cat saved the man from the falling tree.</i> • <i>The cat brought good luck.</i> • <i>The cat sits on the porch and waited politely for some help.</i> • <i>The cat stayed in the temple with the monk and helped him.</i> • <i>The cat saved the warlord when the lightning hit the cherry tree.</i>