

Ventura County  
Special Education Local Plan Area  
SELPA  
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# Preschool Language Acquisition Tool

A tool for determining language  
acquisition for preschool aged students.

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**2019**

Adapted with permission from the  
Los Angeles Unified School  
District, Whitt Hayslip 2008

Revised September 17, 2019

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

When a preschool-aged child is first referred for assessment for special education, the Preschool Language Acquisition Tool must be administered as part of the assessment planning process.

Because students with disabilities may have delays in the areas of general language development and/or cognition, it is often difficult to establish the level of English language proficiency. Therefore, an analysis of proficiency in English as compared to proficiency in the primary language becomes very informative. English Learner status is not determined until after a child begins Kindergarten or TK and is administered the ELPAC. The information from this tool will be used to determine whether the student is considered to be **a student needing additional language support and linguistically appropriate goals on their IEP** or **a student with disabilities in language and/or cognition across languages**.

Students who will need additional language support will receive targeted instruction in English Language Development (ELD), including vocabulary, syntax, morphology, and pragmatics unique to the English language. Students who are considered to be delayed in any language will receive targeted instruction in general development of language and communication.

Preschoolers who are identified as needing additional language support must have at least one linguistically appropriate goal on their IEP from the Preschool ELD goals bank. In addition, all other goals must be linguistically appropriate, which means that they are at the appropriate EL level. The EL levels are indicated in the goals bank.

Also, special consideration must be given to the language in which the goal is taught (English or primary language). For some students this may mean that they will be taught to follow directions, make simple requests or express needs first in their primary language, or, that instructions will be given in both English as well as the primary language, (or primary language only).

In addition, language acquisition activities may be included as a regular component of the daily curriculum. The activities may be infused into other curricular activities to preschool students in need of additional English language support. The California Department of Education *Preschool Learning Foundations*<sup>1</sup> contains a very helpful section on the fundamentals of English language development which may serve as a guideline for preschool teachers. In addition, the California Department of Education's publication *Preschool English Learners – Principles and Practices to Promote Language, Literacy, and Learning*<sup>2</sup> is another useful resource.

This survey will assist in identifying whether or not a special education preschool child is in need of additional language support. Information from other assessments at intake may also be used to supplement this survey.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: This process is valid for preschool purposes only.** Upon entry into kindergarten, students with a home language other than English on the Home Language Survey must be assessed to measure English Language Proficiency using the ELPAC or alternate assessment. The Ventura County SELPA has developed the *Ventura County Comprehensive Alternate Language Proficiency Survey*<sup>3</sup> for Students with Moderate-Severe Disabilities (VCCALPS) for use with students who cannot be assessed using the ELPAC.

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<sup>1</sup> Preschool Learning Foundations, (Volume1), (2008), California Dept. of Education, Sacramento, CA.

<sup>2</sup> Preschool English Learners- Principles and Practices to Promote Language, Literacy and Learning, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (2009) California Dept. of Education, Sacramento, CA.

<sup>3</sup> Ventura County Comprehensive Alternate Language Proficiency Survey (VCCALPS), Ventura County SELPA, (2019), Camarillo, CA.

## PROCESS

<b>STEP ONE:</b>	<b><u>Complete the Parent Interview</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use an interpreter if necessary to assist the parent in responding to the questions.</li><li>• Proceed to Step Two if a language <u>other than English</u> is indicated on:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>three out of the first four</b> questions or</li><li>○ <b>a total of four or more</b> questions on the entire parent interview page.</li></ul></li><li>• If neither of the above are met, you may <u>stop here</u>.</li></ul>
<b>STEP TWO:</b>	<b><u>Administer the Screening Tool</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administer first in English.</li><li>• Administer in primary language if necessary as directed in the instructions.</li><li>• Check correct and incorrect responses and record totals.</li><li>• Based on the responses, the IEP team will develop supports and linguistically appropriate goals, from the Preschool ELD goal bank.</li></ul>

**STEP 1**

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**Preschool Language Acquisition Tool (PLAT)  
PARENT INTERVIEW**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B.: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a language other than English spoken in the home?  No  Yes \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child attend any programs outside the home? Check all that apply.

\_\_\_\_ Private preschool \_\_\_\_ Head Start/State Preschool \_\_\_\_ Group Childcare (3 or more children)

\_\_\_\_ Child Care Center/Daycare

(If another language is spoken in the home, proceed to the following questions. If not, stop here.)

- 1) Which language did your son or daughter use when he or she first began to talk? (*¿Cuándo su hijo(a) empezó a hablar cuál idioma aprendió primero?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) What language does your son or daughter most frequently use at home? (*¿Cuál idioma usa principalmente su hijo(a) cuando conversa en la casa?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) What language do you use most frequently to speak to your son or daughter? (*¿Cuál idioma usa usted con más frecuencia cuando habla con su hijo(a)?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) What language is used most frequently to communicate by/with **sibling(s)**? (*¿Qué idioma se habla con más frecuencia con el hermano(s)?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) What language is used most frequently to communicate by/with **other children** while at play? (*¿Qué idioma se habla con más frecuencia con otros niños mientras juegan?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) What is the language of the **television programs** your child most frequently enjoys? (*¿Cuál es el idioma de los programas de televisión que con más frecuencia disfruta su niño?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) What is the language of the **stories** your child most frequently request? (*¿Cuál es el idioma de los cuentos que su niño pide con más frecuencia?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) (If your child uses any words at all) What language does he/she use most frequently to **express wants and needs**? (*¿Qué idioma usa su niño con más frecuencia para expresar lo que quiere y necesita?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) (If your child uses any words at all) What language does your child most frequently use to **name familiar objects, foods, parts of body**? (*¿Qué idioma usa con más frecuencia su niño para nombrar objetos familiares, alimentos, partes del cuerpo?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) Is there anything else you'd like to share about how your child communicates with you (e.g., signing; pointing, etc.). (*¿Hay otra cosa que le gustaría compartir en como su niño lleva una conversación con usted?*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) If there is a major caregiver (other than immediate family.) What language does the daily caregiver use with your child? (*Si hay un cuidador principal (que no sean familia inmediata). ¿Qué idioma usa el cuidador con su hijo?*) \_\_\_\_\_

Proceed to **Step 2** if any of the questions indicate a language other than English" or if responses to the questions are difficult to obtain due to child's disability or uncertainty on the part of the parent.

# STEP 2

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## PRESCHOOL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION TOOL (PLAT) SCREENING TOOL

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B.: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's home Language: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Begin by administering the following survey in **English**.
2. Circle the “+” sign if the child is able to perform the task. Circle the “-“ **sign** if the child cannot.
3. Indicate totals at bottom of each column.
4. Next administer in **primary language**, for each area where the child scored a “-” in English.
5. Use the scores to determine the need for linguistically appropriate goals.

<b>RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE</b>		English	Primary Language
1	Appears to attend and respond (turns head and/or makes eye contact) when <b>called or addressed by familiar individual</b> .	+ -	+ -
2	Correctly indicates (with eye gaze or pointing) <b>three familiar objects or toys</b> when asked, “Show me ___.”	+ -	+ -
3	Correctly identifies, by pointing/touching or eye gaze <b>at least 3 body parts</b> (on self or another person) when asked “Show me ___.”	+ -	+ -
4	Responds (with words, head nod, or any other appropriate way) <b>when asked if he/she would like a particular food, drink or preferred item</b> . (eg., “Want Juice?”; “Want more?”; “Want blanket?”)	+ -	+ -
5	<b>Demonstrates common actions</b> when requested to do so (without someone modeling the action). (eg., “Look at me,”; “Come here,”; “Wave bye-bye.”)	+ -	+ -
6	Follows simple <b>one-step commands</b> involving familiar objects when presented (eg., “Put the top on the jar,”; “Give me the ___”). [if not physically able, indicates whether adult models action correctly]	+ -	+ -
Totals:			
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		English	Primary Language
1	<b>Uses early expressions</b> (eg., “Uh oh!” when milk or juice spills.; “ba ba” for blanket.)	+ -	+ -
2	<b>Beginning to say first words</b> clearly enough to be understood. (eg., “gih” for give; “dis” for this; “uhee” for cookie.)	+ -	+ -
3	<b>Uses a few words to express needs, wants or interests</b> . (eg. “Up.”(to be picked up); “No”, “Milk”, “Ball”, “Mama”, Dada”.)	+ -	+ -
4	<b>Beginning to use two word utterances to express needs, wants, or interests</b> . (eg., “More milk”, “Big doggie”, “Go bye-bye”, “More please”)	+ -	+ -
5	<b>Starting to add articles before nouns</b> . (eg., “A cat,”; “ The cup,”; “My ball”)	+ -	+ -
6	<b>Uses three-word utterances</b> to communicate. (eg., “I want Juice.” “Daddy go store?” “Want more rice.”)	+ -	+ -
Totals:			

- If the total plusses in English are 4 or less, refer to the Preschool ELD goals– Beginning.
- If the total plusses in English are between 5-8, refer to the Preschool ELD goals– Middle.
- If the total plusses in English are between 9-12, refer to the Preschool ELD goals– Later.

**REMINDER:** This tool is used for determining language acquisition skills for preschool IEP planning purposes only. As students enter TK/K, the Home Language Survey will be given to parents and begins the process of determining English Learner status.