

NSW Department of Education

# Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression





## Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression

In NSW government schools the ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression is used to describe broad phases of English language proficiency. Whilst the ACARA F(K)-2 EAL/D Learning Progression provides a broad overview of language acquisition in K-2 (ACARA, 2015), kindergarten students develop foundation knowledge and skills in reading and writing during their first year of school that are not captured within the ACARA F(K)-2 EAL/D Learning Progression.

The Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression is designed to support teachers working with EAL/D kindergarten learners. Kindergarten EAL/D learners, like their English-speaking peers, enter school with varying levels of print literacy. It is not expected that they already know how to read and write in any language.

Foundational English language skills that relate to language learning in kindergarten, have been described in this resource. In line with the ACARA EAL/D Learning Progression, observable skills and behaviours link to the four modes of listening, speaking, reading and viewing, and writing.

The Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression should be used to identify kindergarten EAL/D learners' phase of English language proficiency with their overall phase entered into Maintain EAL/D in ERN. The Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression has been adapted from the ACARA F(K)-2 EAL/D Learning Progression.





## Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression: Listening

	Beginning	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating
Characteristics of the learner statements by mode	English language learners at the beginning of this phase are unfamiliar with the sounds of English. In this phase they begin to take cues from speakers around them to participate in simple classroom routines and to follow simple instructions. Learners may tire easily and experience a high level of frustration due to the cognitive load of learning a new language. In this phase learners benefit from explicit teaching, supported by visuals and gestures, to understand classroom routines, instructions and lesson content.	English language learners at the beginning of this phase begin to exhibit listening behaviours appropriate for school and attend to simple songs or instructions when visual scaffolds are provided. In this phase, learners increasingly understand and follow well-structured, familiar classroom routines and begin to discriminate between sounds of their home language and spoken English. Learners may experience frustration when attempting to draw meaning from spoken English. In this phase learners still require high levels of visual and gestural support to aid understanding and benefit from being provided with additional time to process requests and instructions.	English language learners at the beginning of this phase can attend for longer periods of time when discussion topics are familiar and speech pace is regular. In this phase, learners increasingly demonstrate appropriate listening behaviours. They begin to listen and comprehend meanings across a broader range of social and academic settings using key words and known phrases to assist with understanding. Learners in this phase continue to benefit from visual supports. They also benefit from explicit vocabulary teaching and opportunities to clarify their understanding.	English language learners at the beginning of this phase actively attend to conversations in English on familiar topics within the classroom. In this phase, learners begin to understand the importance of listening for a range of purposes and draw on a range of discourse markers to make meaning, for example: asking questions to clarify understanding. Learners in this phase require explicit subject-specific vocabulary teaching to assist with effective listening and comprehension across the curriculum.
Kindergarten pointers	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to mimic the reactions of peers to spoken instructions such as lining up at the classroom door.</li> <li>• Begin to respond to teacher modelling, for example: the teacher mimicking eating when it is time for lunch.</li> <li>• Not demonstrate expected listening behaviours for school learning, for example: looking at the teacher, facing the direction of the speaker, sitting still whilst listening or demonstrate understanding.</li> <li>• Notice sounds in English that reflect or differ from those of their home language.</li> <li>• Require additional time and visual aids to assist in processing information.</li> <li>• Begin to demonstrate understanding through actions, gestures and home language, rather than spoken English.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend for short periods of time to lesson content, simple stories and songs when visual scaffolds are used.</li> <li>• Listen for familiar words and formulaic text to tune in to a text read aloud.</li> <li>• Understand and carry out instructions involving one step when supported by visuals, gestures, formulaic or familiar language, for example: get your library bag.</li> <li>• Increasingly understand and follow well structured, familiar classroom routines.</li> <li>• Demonstrate understanding through actions, gestures, familiar words in English or home language.</li> <li>• Begin to discriminate between a small number of sounds in English.</li> <li>• Begin to gain meaning from word stress and key words in phrases.</li> <li>• Require additional time to process information, reflect and respond.</li> <li>• When available, ask other home language speakers for clarification, to translate or repeat information to assist with understanding.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend for longer periods of time to conversations of English speakers on known topics when the speech is clear, easy to understand, and the pace is regular.</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to listen across a broader range of social and academic settings including listening to a friend, listening during classroom discussions and listening to teacher instructions.</li> <li>• Exhibit typical listening behaviours such as facing the person speaking, looking at the speaker and waiting whilst someone is talking.</li> <li>• Follow simple teacher directions with less reliance on gestures and visuals, drawing on a range of discourse markers (such as expression) to help make meaning.</li> <li>• Utilise known key words and/or phrases to understand unfamiliar English in predictable social and learning situations.</li> <li>• Interpret spoken language literally.</li> <li>• Gain meaning through active listening and participate in social and classroom interactions.</li> <li>• Continue to use home language speakers for clarification to translate or repeat information to enhance understanding.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively attend for extended periods of time to the conversations in English on known topics within the classroom setting.</li> <li>• Understand the importance of listening for different purposes across a range of social and academic settings.</li> <li>• Understand that intonation, stress and volume are used with different effects for different purposes.</li> <li>• Demonstrate effective communication skills including active listening and taking turns during discussions.</li> <li>• Follow multi-step teacher directions and explanations.</li> <li>• Draw on a range of discourse markers (such as expression) to assist in constructing meaning.</li> <li>• Recognise and understand the meaning of some subject specific vocabulary.</li> <li>• Increasingly discriminate between sounds in English.</li> <li>• When available, use home language speakers to clarify word meanings or their own understanding of tasks, knowledge of topics or instructions.</li> </ul>

## Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression: Speaking

	Beginning	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating
Characteristics of the learner statements by mode	English language learners at the beginning of this phase may not respond, either verbally or non-verbally to English, in familiar social or classroom situations. In this phase, learners may begin to watch and imitate some social and classroom activities once they feel comfortable doing so. Learners may tire easily and experience a high level of frustration due to the cognitive load of learning a new language. Learners in this phase require high levels of explicit teaching supported by targeted contextual scaffolds including visuals and gestures.	English language learners at the beginning of this phase attempt to communicate verbally and/or non-verbally in familiar situations with people they know. In this phase, learners begin to respond to simple questions using single words or known short phrases. Learners in this phase require explicit language teaching and additional processing time to complete oral activities. Learners may experience frustration when attempting to articulate their thoughts in English. These learners continue to benefit from contextual scaffolds including visuals and gestures.	English language learners at the beginning of this phase communicate verbally in highly structured activities using well-rehearsed language patterns and known vocabulary. In this phase, learners develop an increasing understanding of word order in simple phrases and sentences and develop confidence to initiate conversations in known social situations. Learners in this phase continue to require explicit language teaching to build their vocabulary, especially subject specific language. Contextual scaffolds, including visuals, continue to benefit these learners.	English language learners at the beginning of this phase speak with increasing confidence across a range of social and academic settings. In this phase, learners speak with increasing fluency, fewer hesitations and for a range of purposes. Learners in this phase still require focused language teaching to purposefully engage with the curriculum.
Kindergarten pointers	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go through a silent phase for an extended period of time.</li> <li>• Not respond verbally in English or non-verbally to questions, comments or instructions from the teacher.</li> <li>• Initially watch and imitate some routine social and classroom activities.</li> <li>• Attempt to mimic or repeat common English words heard on a regular basis, for example: yes, no, okay.</li> <li>• Respond in home language.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt to communicate verbally or non-verbally in one-to-one situations with people they trust.</li> <li>• Initially communicate using physical and audible gestures to gain teachers' attention.</li> <li>• Use gestures to support verbal communication.</li> <li>• Use simple single words including content or key words linked to their own interests, personal needs or classroom structures, for example 'done'.</li> <li>• Respond to simple questions non-verbally or by using single words or known simple phrases.</li> <li>• Use common words frequently used by peers and teachers including routine repetitive language aligned to their own needs, for example 'toilet', 'pencil'.</li> <li>• Begin to distinguish between English and other languages, for example: on hearing spoken English, attempts to respond in English.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in highly structured routine exchanges using well-rehearsed language patterns and known vocabulary, for example: 'How are you today? I am fine thank you.'</li> <li>• Demonstrate an increasing understanding of word order in simple phrases and sentences.</li> <li>• Make simple requests using mostly appropriate word order, for example: 'Can I go to toilet please?'</li> <li>• Use an expanding range of common, everyday vocabulary with increasing confidence.</li> <li>• Use comprehensible pronunciation when speaking.</li> <li>• Understand the use of vocabulary in familiar contexts related to personal experiences, interests and curriculum topics taught within the classroom.</li> <li>• Adapt existing vocabulary to talk about a topic to compensate for unfamiliar language, attempting approximations using known language to cover gaps.</li> <li>• Follow conversation conventions by listening, taking turns to speak and acknowledging what others have said.</li> <li>• When available, make use of home language speakers to provide words, clarification and translation.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with growing confidence, improved fluency and with fewer hesitations, structuring contributions with increasingly accurate word order.</li> <li>• Attempt to match correct noun and pronoun references when speaking, for example: 'The boy went to the shops. He went with his mum.'</li> <li>• Increasingly use appropriate voice level, articulation and communicate effectively using agreed conventions, for example: turn taking, staying on topic.</li> <li>• Develop an expanding vocabulary and attempt to use words appropriately, however, may still have some errors.</li> <li>• Attempt to use correct English word stress and intonation when making statements and asking questions.</li> <li>• Contribute to class discussions appropriately by asking/responding to questions.</li> <li>• Increasingly use tense appropriately when speaking.</li> <li>• Explore complex ideas in home language drawing on home language structures and features when attempting unfamiliar English constructions (code-switch) or may code mix (mix home language and English) to express detailed ideas.</li> </ul>

## Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression: Reading and Viewing

	Beginning	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating
Characteristics of the learner statements by mode	<p>English language learners at the beginning of this phase are new to noticing English in print. In this phase they may attempt to show interest in looking at books and may attempt to 'read' by creating their own stories, in their home language, whilst looking at pictures to understand texts. Learners in this phase require targeted contextual scaffolds, for example: visuals and gestures and high levels of teacher support, to develop early reading behaviours and concepts about print.</p>	<p>English language learners at the beginning of this phase know that print makes meaning. They imitate reading behaviours through memorisation of simple texts. In this phase learners develop an understanding that English words are separated by spaces, are read from left to right and can use one-to-one correspondence during reading. Learners develop foundation knowledge of letter-sound relationships and begin to use this knowledge to blend two phonemes together to make a word, for example: a/t, at. Learners in this phase should engage with texts with familiar content while being supported through high levels of explicit teaching, repetition of key skills and visuals.</p>	<p>English language learners at the beginning of this phase develop a bank of known, simple high frequency words which they can read in texts. They blend consonant-vowel-consonant words, for example: c/a/n and decode words using their knowledge of letter-sound relationships. In this phase learners read simple texts slowly with increasing independence and confidence. They understand that words and sentences have meaning and comprehend at a literal level. Learners in this phase require multiple opportunities to read texts to develop sight word recognition, fluency and phrasing. They require explicit, focused language teaching which clearly explains the meanings in text, reading skills and the strategies needed to become proficient readers. Learners need support to understand cultural references presented in texts.</p>	<p>English language learners at the beginning of this phase read some texts independently and with increased fluency drawing on their proficiency in oral language to support comprehension. They begin to manipulate letters to assist with reading. In this phase they begin to use self-correction strategies such as pausing when meaning is disrupted, and using picture cues and their growing knowledge of English language to predict text. Learners show comprehension at a literal level and, with support, begin to grasp inferential meaning. Whilst learners in this phase are becoming more independent, they still benefit from teacher questioning, prompting of reading strategies, and explicit teaching of language and comprehension strategies. Learners need continued support to understand cultural references presented in texts.</p>
Kindergarten pointers	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to show interest in looking at books to gain meaning.</li> <li>• Be unfamiliar with how books work, including print conventions such as directionality, especially if it differs from their home language.</li> <li>• Begin to understand that print makes meaning for example: 'read' books by looking at pictures and making up their own stories using home language.</li> <li>• Begin to recognise that print is different from illustrations.</li> <li>• Recognise own first name in isolation.</li> <li>• Benefit from the use of home language with home language speaking peers and/or teachers to understand texts.</li> <li>• Begin to mimic a sound-symbol relationship when prompted by the teacher.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to develop an initial understanding of English sound-symbol relationships, such as the letters and sounds in their first name.</li> <li>• Imitate reading through memorisation or creating their own story while looking at pictures.</li> <li>• Recognise own first name when presented with other text.</li> <li>• Look at a variety of texts including books and other print sources, focusing on illustrations to create meaning.</li> <li>• Begin to use one-to-one correspondence (points to words) when engaging with short, simple repetitive texts.</li> <li>• Begin to develop return sweep.</li> <li>• Recognise that words and pictures have meaning and that words can be read aloud.</li> <li>• Begin to show an enjoyment of books read aloud, for example: may smile, laugh, focus on the pictures.</li> <li>• Begin to bring previous cultural and linguistic experiences to the reading task to make sense of print.</li> <li>• Require support to interpret images that are culturally specific or unfamiliar.</li> <li>• Benefit greatly from the use of home language with home language speaking peers and/or teachers.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a foundational understanding of regular predictable English sound-letter relationships.</li> <li>• Blend simple vowel-consonant and consonant-vowel-consonant words, for example: a/t, c/a/n.</li> <li>• Use knowledge of letters and sounds to decode words, including those in initial and final positions.</li> <li>• Read word by word at a slow pace with increasing independence.</li> <li>• Recognise and read simple high frequency words in simple texts for example: I, the, a, it, can.</li> <li>• Engage with texts read aloud and demonstrate an understanding of the main ideas presented.</li> <li>• Consistently use return sweep and one-to-one correspondence when reading.</li> <li>• Make connections between texts read and personal experiences, for example 'I have a cat too'.</li> <li>• Use picture cues to assist with reading and to recall details in texts.</li> <li>• Begin to understand metalanguage related to reading, for example: letter, word, sentence, author, illustrator.</li> <li>• Benefit greatly from the use of home language to clarify and support understanding.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to recognise familiar patterns in words and use this knowledge to read unfamiliar words, for example: using the known word 'look' to read 'book'.</li> <li>• Begin to read with greater fluency using some two or three-word phrases based on known vocabulary, for example: said Mum.</li> <li>• Use strategies for decoding unfamiliar words, for example: saying words slowly, finding small words in bigger words, using knowledge of blends.</li> <li>• Manipulate letters to assist reading, for example: delete an onset to make a new word, delete a rhyme to say an onset.</li> <li>• Show comprehension of texts at a literal level and, with teacher input, begin to grasp inferential meaning.</li> <li>• Begin to use self-correction strategies, for example: rereading, pausing when meaning is disrupted, predicting and using picture cues.</li> <li>• Begin to build understanding and meaning of texts for different purposes including utilising illustrations.</li> <li>• Begin to notice how intonation, pace and volume are used to shape meaning in texts when read aloud.</li> <li>• Begin to understand that written texts are structured differently from spoken texts.</li> <li>• Benefit from the use of home language to clarify and support understanding.</li> </ul>



## Kindergarten EAL/D Learning Progression: Writing

	Beginning	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating
Characteristics of the learner statements by mode	<p>English language learners at the beginning of this phase have limited previous experiences with written English. They begin to develop an understanding that writing differs to images and attempt to 'write' using scribbles or recognisable symbols. Learners in this phase require targeted contextual scaffolds including visuals, gestures and high levels of teacher support to develop early writing skills and concepts about print.</p>	<p>English language learners at the beginning of this phase make clear attempts at writing by copying simple words and attempting to write their name independently. In this phase learners construct texts using pictures and copied words, develop an understanding that letters are grouped together to form words, that words can be written using letters and that words carry meaning. Learners in this phase require high levels of explicit teaching, repetition of key concepts and skills, and visual supports.</p>	<p>English language learners at the beginning of this phase write words, with some scaffolding, including simple high frequency words and words of personal significance. In this phase, they begin to write simple sentences based on repetitive structured examples. Learners show an awareness of writing conventions including directionality, spacing and basic punctuation. They develop confidence to write unknown words independently by drawing on their foundation knowledge of letter-sound relationships. Learners in this phase require modelled writing opportunities prior to writing their own texts. They require explicit, focused language teaching which clearly explains the writing, grammar, spelling and punctuation skills they need.</p>	<p>English language learners at the beginning of this phase are learning to produce independent writing at an age-appropriate level. In this phase, learners develop strategies beyond sounding out to write unknown words including utilising print in the classroom. Learners begin to re-read their own writing to check it makes sense and begin to edit for basic punctuation, spelling and legibility. Home language influence may be evident in learners word choices and grammatical errors. Whilst learners in this phase are becoming more independent, they still benefit from teacher questioning, prompting of writing skills and explicit teaching of grammar, spelling and editing strategies.</p>
Kindergarten pointers	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt to form letters as images or scribbles rather than as recognisable symbols.</li> <li>• Have little or no experience with common writing mediums including pencils and paper, and require explicit teaching to develop appropriate pencil grip.</li> <li>• Require hand-over-hand support to trace a given letter.</li> <li>• Trace letters with varying degrees of accuracy (incorrect formation, wobbly letters).</li> <li>• Compose texts using drawings.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt to write their own name without prompts (may be spelt or formed incorrectly).</li> <li>• Compose texts using drawings and copied words.</li> <li>• Copy letters or simple words with varying degrees of accuracy (may have letter reversals, incorrect formation).</li> <li>• Begin to understand that writing and print are used to convey a message and have meaning.</li> <li>• Show awareness of English print conventions including writing from left to right, top to bottom, however words may be spelt incorrectly and/or difficult to read.</li> <li>• Write a few recognisable words independently although they may not be spelt or formed correctly.</li> <li>• Recognise that words are groups of letters and words are separated by spaces.</li> <li>• Begin to contribute ideas to joint construction of texts.</li> <li>• Understand that spoken words and sounds can be written using letters of the English alphabet.</li> <li>• Begin to demonstrate awareness that letters in English represent sounds when writing.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute ideas to the joint construction of texts.</li> <li>• Write individual letters and simple words in a legible way.</li> <li>• Independently write some basic known high frequency words, for example: I, can, and, to, the, and words of personal importance.</li> <li>• Talk about intended writing prior to writing.</li> <li>• Write simple sentences using repetitive structures, familiar words and phrases from their oral language or by following highly-structured examples, for example: I went to the shop. I went to the park.</li> <li>• Use and show an understanding of basic punctuation, for example: full stops and capital letters.</li> <li>• Begin to identify the audience and/or reason for writing, for example: I am writing to tell my friend about my holiday.</li> <li>• Vocalise words to approximate spelling-attempt to write unknown words using letter-sound knowledge, for example: frend for friend.</li> </ul>	<p>Students in this phase may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an awareness that texts are written for a specific audience and purpose.</li> <li>• Use word walls and environmental print to support writing.</li> <li>• Use a range of strategies beyond sounding out to write unknown words, for example: chunking.</li> <li>• Write independently at an age-appropriate level in a range of contexts using familiar words and phrases.</li> <li>• Use an expanding range of vocabulary in writing, which may still reflect their spoken vocabulary.</li> <li>• Begin to edit own writing, for example: checking for full stops, capital letters, spelling.</li> <li>• Read own writing aloud to check it makes sense.</li> <li>• Demonstrate an emerging awareness that written language differs from spoken language.</li> </ul>

This resources has been based on ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority) (2015) English as an Additional Language or Dialect Teacher Resource EAL/D Learning Progression: Foundation to Year 10. ACARA.

