

Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

Notes: *These Adjusted Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs), based on the evidence collected from the Spring 2025 Reassessment, were developed by ADE with the input and recommendations of Arizona educator committees. The Adjusted PLDs are intended for use in the interpretation of the Spring 2026 Reassessment test results in accordance with the adjusted cut scores.*

The Adjusted PLDs describe the skills, knowledge, and abilities described in the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards that students typically demonstrate at each proficiency level, while acknowledging that students may show a range of abilities within any level.

Although some of the Adjusted PLD statements may appear similar across grade bands, the expectations are based on grade-appropriate stimuli and tasks.

The phrase "responses may be partially complete or clear" is included in some of the Adjusted PLDs to signal that for multipoint test items, two or more score point responses may still reflect skills associated with the Intermediate or even Proficient levels, though the clarity or completeness of those skills may still be developing.

While the PLDs are presented as a linear progression for ease of understanding, actual language development is not strictly linear and may vary across domains and contexts.

The AZELLA PLDs contain a comprehensive number of the skills, knowledge, and abilities described in the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards, but do not represent all of them.

Listening		
<i>Students scoring Basic at the 9–12 grade band have demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.</i>	<i>Students scoring Intermediate at the 9–12 grade band are assumed to have acquired the skills described at the "Basic" proficiency level and have demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.</i>	<i>Students scoring Proficient at the 9–12 grade band are assumed to have acquired the skills described at the "Intermediate" and "Basic" proficiency levels and have independently demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.</i>
Identifies the main topic and some key details of presentations, lessons, and discussions	Determines the central idea of presentations, lessons, and discussions and explains how it is supported by using text evidence	Analyzes central ideas of presentations, lessons, and discussions and explains how they are supported by using text evidence
Identifies some of the key ideas expressed in presentations, lessons, and discussions	Recounts specific details and summarizes the key points expressed in presentations, lessons, and discussions	Recounts and summarizes increasingly complex presentations, lessons, and discussions, including key points, specific details, and the evidence discussed
Uses visual information to gain a better understanding of presentations, lessons, and discussions	Explains how visual information (e.g., charts, tables, diagrams) supports presentations, lessons, and discussions	Explains how visual information (e.g., charts, tables, diagrams) supports increasingly complex presentations, lessons, and discussions
Recognizes the meaning of frequently occurring words, phrases, and common idiomatic expressions in oral texts	Determines the meaning of general academic and content-specific words and phrases and some idiomatic expressions and figurative language in oral texts	Determines the meaning of a wider range of general academic and content-specific words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, and figurative language in spoken texts about a variety of topics, experiences, or events

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• Responds to simple wh- questions	• Responds to a variety of wh- questions	• Identifies relevant questions to gain information or clarify understanding
• Makes inferences and draws conclusions from simple read-alouds, presentations, discussions, and conversations	• Makes inferences and draws conclusions from increasingly complex read-alouds, presentations, discussions, and conversations	• Makes inferences and draws conclusions from grade-appropriate read-alouds, presentations, discussions, and conversations
• Identifies a reason a speaker uses to support a main point on a variety of academic subjects	• Identifies a speaker's main point and the reason or evidence a speaker uses to support a point on a variety of academic subjects	• Identifies a speaker's specific point and explains how the speaker uses a reason or evidence to support the point on a variety of academic subjects

Reading		
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Identifies the main topic and some key details of literary and informational texts on a variety of academic topics	Determines the central idea of literary and informational texts, and explains how it is supported by text evidence	Determines the theme or central idea of increasingly complex texts, and explains how it is supported by using text evidence
	Recounts specific details and summarizes key points and details in literary and informational texts	Recounts specific details and summarizes key points and details in increasingly complex texts
Identifies key details and evidence from a variety of written texts	Cites specific details and evidence to support understanding of a variety of written texts	Cites specific details and evidence to support an understanding of increasingly complex written texts
Identifies different text structures and text types in a variety of texts	Identifies text structures and text types that impact the central idea or the theme of a variety of texts	Identifies different text structures and text types in increasingly complex texts, and explains how text structure, text type, and other text elements impact the central idea or the theme
Establishes a connection between visual information (e.g., tables, diagrams, illustrations) and a variety of written texts	Uses visual information (e.g., tables, diagrams, illustrations) to gain a better understanding of a variety of written texts	Explains how visual information (e.g., tables, diagrams, illustrations) supports a variety of written texts

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Recognizes the meaning of frequently occurring words and phrases, common idiomatic expressions, and simple figurative language in context	Determines the meaning of general academic and content-specific words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, and figurative language in context	Determines the meaning of a wider range of general academic and content-specific words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, and figurative language in context
Applies information from non-textual visual aids and knowledge of common English affixes to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words	Applies context clues and a developing knowledge of grade-appropriate English morphology to determine the meaning of unknown words	Applies context clues and knowledge of grade-appropriate English morphology to determine the meaning of unknown general academic and content-specific words and phrases
Gathers information from a literary or informational text to answer questions	Gathers information from multiple sources to answer questions about informational texts	Gathers information from multiple sources to answer questions about informational texts on a variety of academic topics
Uses textual evidence to make inferences and draw conclusions about simple texts		Uses textual evidence to make inferences and draw conclusions about grade-appropriate informational texts

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Identifies a reason an author uses to support a main point of informational texts	Identifies and explains the reason or evidence an author gives to support a claim made in a variety of academic texts	Identifies an author's main argument, and identifies or explains the reason or evidence an author gives to support an increasingly complex position or claim on a variety of academic subjects

Writing		
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Writes one or more narrative sentences where no clear main idea is present; conventions and story elements are inconsistent and include errors that impede communication	Writes one or more narrative paragraphs that use some appropriate conventions and details, and include story elements, such as a setting, a plot, and one or more characters	Writes one or more narrative paragraphs that use appropriate conventions and relevant details, and include story elements, such as a setting, a plot, one or more characters, and dialogue
Writes one or more informational sentences about a provided academic topic where no clear cohesive idea is present; errors in grammar and conventions impede communication	Writes one or more grade-appropriate informational paragraphs with details and examples about a provided academic topic	Writes one or more grade-appropriate informational paragraphs that include specific details or relevant examples on a provided academic topic
	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary in context	Use precise grade-appropriate language and domain-specific vocabulary in context
Uses simple sentences with a limited range of appropriate transitions	Constructs sentences using appropriate transitions to clarify ideas	Constructs a variety of sentences using appropriate transitions to connect, compare, or contrast ideas and information, and to create cohesion

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Writes one or more persuasive sentences that state a position, where no clear ideas or supporting reasons are present; errors in grammar and conventions impede communication	Writes one or more grade-appropriate persuasive paragraphs that state a position, provide an argument, and support the position with some evidence	Writes one or more grade-appropriate persuasive paragraphs that state a clear position, provide a convincing argument, and support the position with relevant evidence
	Provides a concluding statement to a persuasive argument	Provides a grade-appropriate conclusion to a persuasive argument
		Uses appropriate register, tone, and style according to task, purpose, and audience
Uses frequently occurring general academic and content-specific words and phrases to express ideas	Uses an increasing number of general academic and content-specific words and phrases to express ideas	Uses a wide variety of general academic and content-specific words and phrases to precisely express ideas
	Participates in written exchanges, editing sentences as appropriate to the task, including peer editing	Participates in written exchanges, editing more complex sentences in grade-appropriate tasks, including peer editing

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• Uses standard English conventions appropriately, allowing for some significant errors that interfere with the expression or communication of ideas	• Uses standard English conventions appropriately, allowing for some minor errors that may interfere with the expression or communication of ideas	• Uses standard English conventions appropriately with few, if any, errors that interfere with the expression or communication of ideas
• Demonstrates some command of English grammar and syntax, allowing for some significant errors that interfere with the expression or communication of ideas	• Demonstrates general command of English grammar and syntax, allowing for some minor errors that do not interfere with the expression or communication of ideas	• Demonstrates command of English grammar and syntax, with few, if any, significant errors that interfere with the expression or communication of ideas
• Recognizes standard English correctly, including: ○ subject pronouns and possessive nouns ○ frequently occurring descriptive, possessive, and demonstrative adjectives	• Uses standard English correctly, including: ○ possessives with grade-appropriate nouns, and personal subject and object pronouns	• Uses standard English correctly, including: ○ possessive and indefinite pronouns

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• Uses standard English correctly, including: ○ familiar common and proper nouns ○ familiar verbs in the present progressive or past progressive ○ familiar verbs in the simple present and simple past, including some irregular verbs ○ familiar verbs to describe the future, using <i>going to</i> and <i>will</i> ○ subject-verb agreement using familiar nouns and verbs	• Uses standard English correctly, including: ○ familiar common and proper nouns with appropriate determiners ○ verbs in the past progressive or verbs distinguishing present progressive and simple present ○ verbs in the simple present and simple past, including familiar irregular verbs ○ verbs to describe the future using <i>going to</i> and <i>will</i> ○ subject-verb agreement using a wider range of nouns and verbs	• Uses standard English correctly, including: ○ grade-appropriate common and proper nouns with appropriate determiners ○ grade-appropriate verbs in the past progressive used in increasingly complex sentences ○ grade-appropriate verbs in the simple present and simple past, including irregular verbs ○ grade-appropriate verbs to describe the future using <i>going to</i> and <i>will</i> ○ subject-verb agreement using grade-appropriate nouns and verbs

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○ some frequently occurring prepositional phrases to express time, place, manner, or cause, about a familiar activity or process ○ some simple modals, such as <i>can</i>, <i>could</i>, <i>may</i>, and <i>might</i> ○ appropriate word order (subject-verb-object) in basic declarative and interrogative sentences	○ a wider range of prepositional phrases, such as <i>after lunch</i>, to express time, place, manner, or cause about a familiar activity or process ○ frequently occurring conjunctions, such as <i>and</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>or</i>, <i>so</i>, and <i>because</i> ○ frequently occurring modals, such as <i>shall</i>, <i>should</i>, <i>will</i>, and <i>would</i> ○ appropriate word order (subject-verb-object) in increasingly complex declarative, imperative, and interrogative sentences	○ a variety of prepositional phrases, such as <i>toward the playground</i>, to provide details about time, manner, place, or cause ○ less-frequently occurring modals, such as <i>ought</i> and <i>had better</i> ○ appropriate word order (subject-verb-object) in complex declarative, imperative, and interrogative sentences

Speaking		
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	Delivers short oral presentations; responses may be partially complete or clear	Delivers short oral presentations that include relevant details and examples to develop a topic
Begins to express an opinion on a familiar topic	Expresses an opinion on a variety of topics; responses may be partially complete or clear and include some supporting details	Expresses opinions on a variety of topics with mostly complete and clear responses, including supporting details
Begins to participate in short discussions and conversations about familiar topics	Participates in short discussions and conversations about familiar topics; responses are mostly complete and clear	Participates in discussions and conversations about a variety of topics; responses are mostly complete and clear
Responds to simple wh- questions	Responds to a variety of questions and asks questions to clarify or understand information on a variety of topics and texts	Poses and responds to relevant questions about a variety of grade-appropriate topics and texts
	Compares and contrasts ideas, information, and events; responses may be partially complete or clear	Compares and contrasts ideas, information, and events with mostly complete and clear responses

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Begins to create speech or recount a simple sequence of events	Begins to create clear and coherent grade-appropriate speech or recount a sequence of events in order; responses may include some details and linking words	Creates clear and coherent grade-appropriate speech or recounts a detailed sequence of events, with a beginning, a middle, and an end, using linking and temporal words to demonstrate an understanding of how ideas, events, or reasons are linked