

The Manhattan/ Staten Island BETAC at Hunter College and the Bronx BETAC at  
Fordham University...New York, New York

## **What's Common About Common *Language* Assessment?**

### **English Language Learners!**

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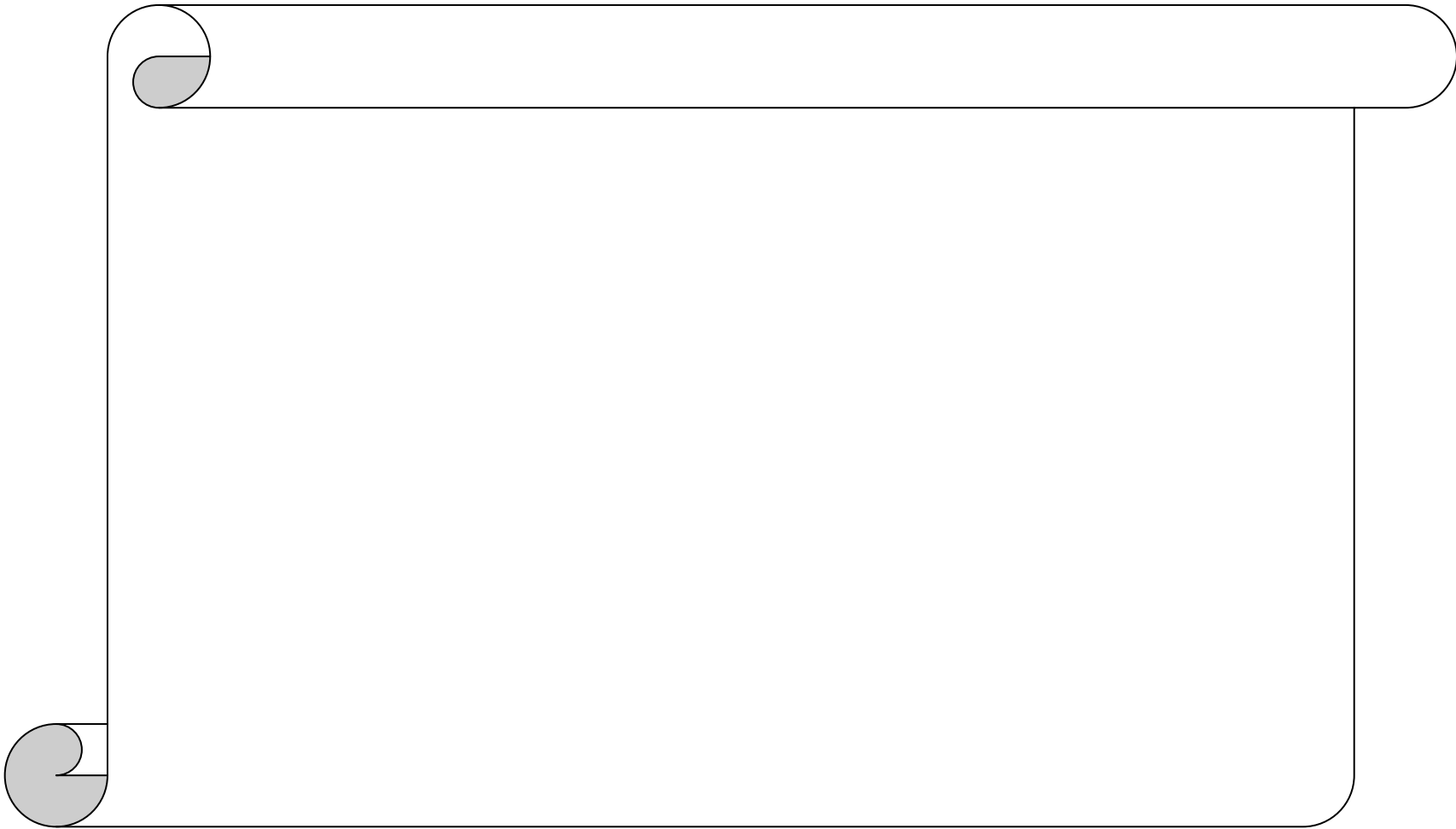
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#### **Today's Questions**

- ✕ What is common assessment and how is it distinguished from other forms?
  - ✕ What is common *language* assessment and why is it necessary?
  - ✕ How might you begin building common *language* assessment?

## Activity 1: An Assessment Audit

Name **all** the measures given to your English language learners throughout the academic year for both language proficiency and academic achievement.



Now, categorize the measures given to your English language learners according to the level of implementation:

Classroom	School	Language Education Program	New York City Public Schools / State
❖	➤	☐	✓

## Activity 2: Graph of Forms of Assessments

Plot the number of each form of assessment for language learners identified across levels of implementation.

N of measures	Idiosyncratic	Common	Interim	Standardized
8				
7				
6				
5				
4				
3				
2				
1				

### Activity 3: Common Assessment for English Language Learners

As educators of English language learners, how might you rectify these non-examples of common assessments? Based on the characteristics of common assessment, what suggestions might you make to classroom teachers in how to better assess the language proficiency of English language learners?

Non-example of Common Instructional Assessment	Reconciliation for English Language Learners
At the Elementary School Level	
Testing spelling words from the textbook on set Fridays	
Administering publisher 'formative' and 'summative' tests for a unit of study	
At the Middle School Level	
Reading the same novel in all Language Arts classes and writing responses to the same questions	
Having end-of-chapter assignments due on the same day	
At the Secondary School Level	
Using the identical end-of- course test	
Having Department Chairs create a test that all teachers of that subject use	

Gottlieb, M. (in press). *Common instructional assessment for English Language Learners: Building blocks and benchmarks for language proficiency and academic achievement*. Indianapolis, IN: Solution Tree.

## Activity 4: Planning for Common Language Assessment

In planning for common language assessment, select the targeted subgroup(s) of English language learners, their grade or grade level cluster, and the type of assessment you are considering.

Subgroup of English Language Learners	Grade or Grade-level Cluster	Language Domain(s) (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing)	Type of Assessment (Screeners, Diagnostic Tools, Surveys, Observations, or Performance Tasks with Rubrics, Tests)
Young English Language Learners Born in the U.S.			
English Language Learners Literate in Their Native Language (L1)			
Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE)			
Long-term English Language Learners			
Newcomers to the United States			
English Language Learners with Considerations for Special Education			
English Language Learners in Dual Language or Two-Way Immersion Programs			

## Final Activity: Designing Common Language Assessments for English Language Learners: A Possible Template

**Step 1:** Identify the students for whom the common language assessment is to be designed.

Grade or grade-level cluster: \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) and cultural group(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Language proficiency levels (in L2 or L1): \_\_\_\_\_

Educational experiences: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2:** Select a *language* standard and type of assessment for the group of selected English language learners reflective of your instructional program.

Language standard:

Type of assessment:

**Step 3:** Choose a *language* domain and formulate one or more *language* targets for the students' given levels of language proficiency. (Think of the *language* associated with the standard that this group of students needs to access grade-level content.)

Language domain(s):

Language target(s):

**Step 4:** Suggest performance assessment activities or a task that measures the *language* target(s).



**Step 5:** Create or adapt a documentation form, scoring guide, or rubric that would best capture the students' performance for the given language target(s) according to their levels of language proficiency.

What might it look like?

**Step 6:** Interpret samples of student work against the rubric and come to an agreement on what the students CAN DO in relation to the language target(s). Finally, decide how you plan to use the information from the assessment.

What criteria might you use?

## Related Resources on Assessing Language Learners

- Bailey, A. L., & Heritage, M. (2008). *Formative assessment for literacy, grades K-6: Building reading and academic skills across the curriculum*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.
- Data: Now what? (December 2008/ January 2009) *Educational Leadership* 66 (4).
- Gottlieb, M. (2008). *Assessing English language learners: A multimedia kit for professional development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Gottlieb, M. (2007). *ELL assessment kit: Teacher's manual*. Austin, TX: Rigby/ Harcourt Achieve.
- Gottlieb, M. & Nguyen, D. (2007). *Assessment & accountability in language education programs: A guide for administrators and teachers*. Philadelphia, PA: Caslon Publishing.
- Gottlieb, M., Cranley, E., & Oliver, A. (2007). *English language proficiency standards and resource guide, 2007.Edition, PreKindergarten through Grade12*. Madison, WI: Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System on behalf of the WIDA Consortium.
- Gottlieb, M., Katz, A., & Ernst-Slavit, G. (2009). *Paper to practice: Using the English language proficiency standards in PreK-12 classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
- McKay, P. (2006). *Assessing young language learners*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.