

**Introduction to**

**Ohio's Revised Standards for**  
**English Speakers of Other Languages:**  
**Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing**

Prepared by  
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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Ohio's revised English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) standards for listening, speaking, reading and writing were developed and validated through the combined efforts of many people. Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) practitioners with content area and teaching expertise provided invaluable guidance throughout the revision process.

Also, a word of thanks goes to the Resource Center Network staff for their assistance and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) ABLE office for support throughout the standards revision process.

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To ensure continuous improvement, Ohio ABE adopted Equipped for the Future content standards in listening, speaking, reading and writing for its English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) population. These standards are intended to guide local programs with ESOL components as they provide instruction to individuals. Using the Adult Basic Education standards revision process, in 2004 local and national practitioners with expertise in the four content areas (i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing) revised and validated Ohio's ESOL standards. Ohio's revised ESOL standards were effective beginning July 1, 2005. In January 2006, however, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) released new descriptors that necessitated the revision of Ohio's ESOL standards. The Evaluation Design Project at The Ohio State University worked with a small panel of practitioners to revise and validate the standards. This document presents the product of the revision process.

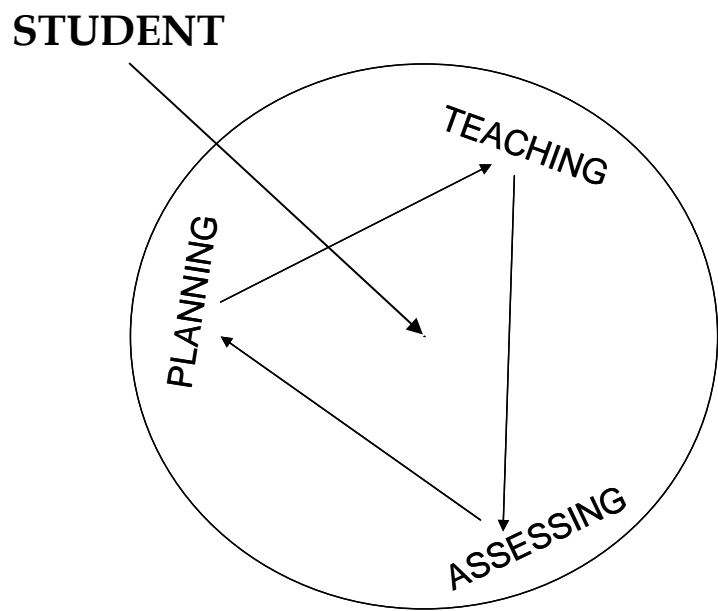
The purpose of this document is to introduce and clarify Ohio's revised standards for listening, speaking, reading and writing. This guide will:

- explain the standards revision and validation processes and
- present the revised standards.

## WHAT ARE STANDARDS?

Standards are broad statements of what students should know and be able to do. They define the content and process used to make decisions about planning, teaching and assessing. Students should be at the center of the planning, teaching and assessing cycle. For example:

- **Planning:** Students are integral in developing the Individual Learning Plan.
- **Teaching:** In collaboration, students and teachers can develop activities that are grounded in what students already know (e.g., using materials such as newspapers or magazines familiar to students).
- **Assessing:** Students can evaluate their own progress toward goals as well as collaborate with the teacher on the selection of evidence for the ABE Portfolio System.



## WHAT ARE STANDARDS? (continued)

### Benefits of standards

- Standards provide a common language for students, teachers, administrators and the community to discuss and understand Adult Basic and Literacy Education.
- Standards make students aware of what they need to accomplish so they can make progress.
- Standards encourage student participation in learning, fostering a student-centered environment.
- Standards fit naturally within the planning-teaching-assessing cycle.

## WHY DID ODE ABLE ADOPT STANDARDS?

To incorporate both performance and standardized assessment in its ABLE system, in February 2006 the Uniform Portfolio System was revised and renamed the ABLE Portfolio System. Ohio's standards are a vital part of the ABLE Portfolio System and set the stage for the alignment of assessments, curriculum and instruction. They also help to accomplish goals established in the ODE ABLE Strategic Plan (i.e., Define and raise expectations of what ABLE students should know and be able to do.).

## WHY WERE THE STANDARDS REVISED?

To ensure continuous improvement, the standards were revised to:

- reflect the content and process of listening, speaking, reading and writing;
- integrate the national EFF listening, speaking, reading and writing standards into the ABLE Portfolio System;
- update the content of the standards by building and extending concepts across educational functioning levels;
- reflect feedback for needed improvement to the original standards and competencies;
- further support the planning-teaching-assessing cycle; and
- prepare for validation studies of the standards.

## HOW WERE THE STANDARDS REVISED?

The listening, speaking, reading and writing standards were revised through a process of input, evaluation and synthesis.

ABLE practitioners with content area and teaching expertise revised the standards by:

### **Considering Input**

- Collecting and incorporating state, national and international standards resources, as needed
- Creating benchmark statements to support the standards

### **Evaluation**

- Reviewing multiple drafts during revision process

### **Synthesis**

- Revising draft documents based on evaluation of the benchmarks

## WHY WERE THE STANDARDS VALIDATED?

The main purpose for validating the revised ESOL standards was to ensure alignment with the National Reporting System's (NRS) Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs). Aligning benchmarks with EFLs is important for teaching to the appropriate levels, as well as for capturing student achievement and reporting it to the U.S. Department of Education. These reports help to document Ohio's progress.

## HOW WERE THE STANDARDS VALIDATED?

Improving on the ABE standards validation process, a statewide survey was used to collect validation information on the revised ESOL standards. In the statewide survey, practitioners were asked to indicate matches between the ESOL benchmarks and EFLs within strands. In order to obtain more rigorous evidence, the benchmarks for each strand were randomly ordered and the task of the survey respondent was to indicate the EFL associated with each benchmark statement. The average EFL as judged by survey respondents and the proportion of respondents indicating that the benchmark was at the intended level (i.e., as written by the panel) were used to make adjustments to the benchmarks. All changes were small and consisted of switching two adjacent levels.

## HOW DO ABLE PROGRAMS USE STANDARDS?

The following statements guided the revision process and are important to keep in mind as ABLE programs and practitioners make the transition to the revised listening, speaking, reading and writing standards:

### Standards...

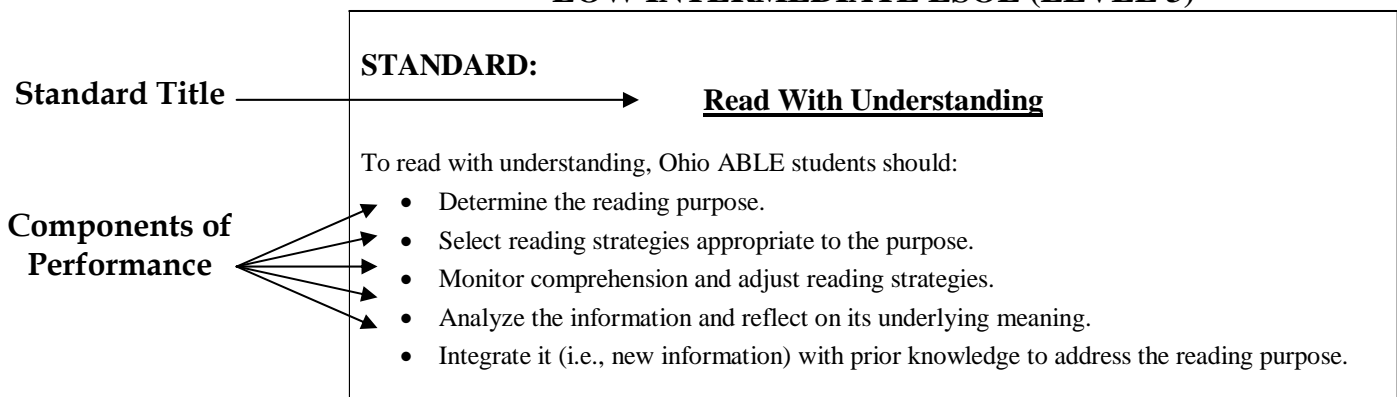
- are crucial to defining learner success in Ohio's Student Experience Model;
- focus student and teacher use of Ohio's ABLE Portfolio System;
- enrich the ABLE classroom as a student-centered environment; and
- guide planning, teaching and assessing.

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

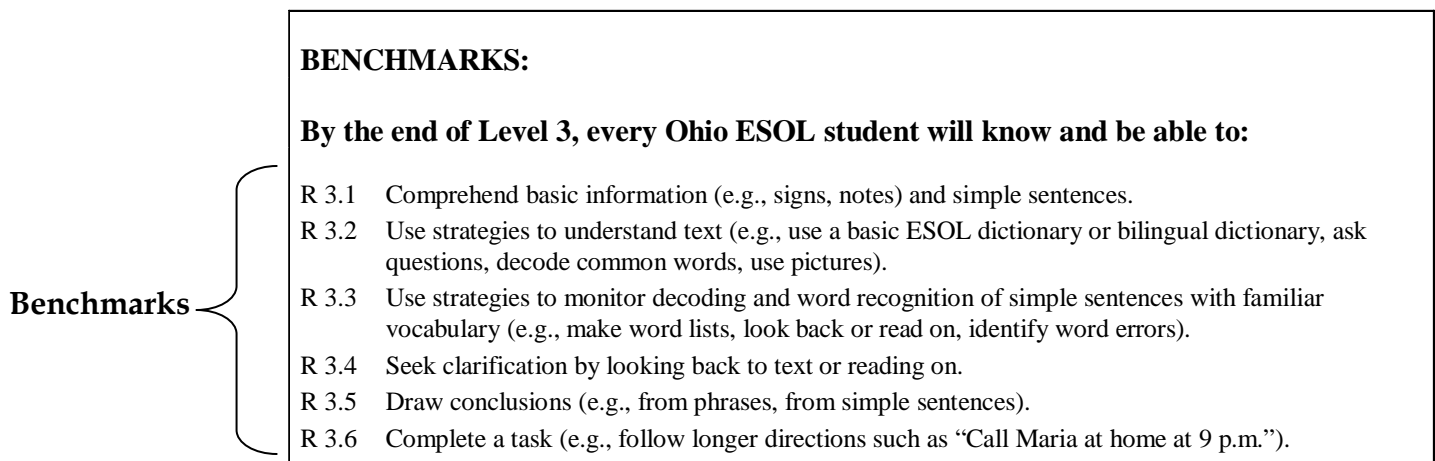
To understand the revised listening, speaking, reading and writing standards, it is important to be aware of the structure of the standards and terms used to describe elements of the standards.

Each of the four standards (i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing) is organized as follows:

### LOW INTERMEDIATE ESOL (LEVEL 3)



**The following benchmarks are statements that every Ohio ESOL student will demonstrate the ability to do in order to advance to the next NRS Educational Functioning Level.**



## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT (continued)

The **Components of Performance** are a series of statements which collectively define the practice of each standard. They describe the steps or processes of the content area.

**Benchmarks** describe expected performance at a particular place on the NRS Educational Functioning Level continuum.

- Benchmarks provide “observation” and “documentation” for standards: before, during and after instruction.
- Benchmark statements are provided for each content area (i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing) over the six educational functioning levels of the NRS.

### Numbering of Benchmarks

- Each benchmark has a unique letter-number identifier.
  - ♦ The letter indicates the content area (i.e., listening = L, speaking = S, reading = R and writing = W).
  - ♦ The first number indicates the NRS level.
  - ♦ The second number indicates the benchmark number.

For example:

NRS Level  
(Level 3)

Content Area  
(Reading)      Benchmark Number

**BENCHMARKS:**

**By the end of Level 3, an ESOL student will know and be able to:**

R 3.1 Comprehend information (e.g., signs, notes) and simple sentences.

R 3.2 Use strategies to understand text (e.g., use a basic ESOL dictionary or bilingual dictionary, ask questions, decode common words, use pictures).

**R 3.3 Use strategies to monitor decoding and word recognition of simple sentences with familiar vocabulary (e.g., make word lists, look back or read on, identify word errors).**

R 3.4 Seek clarification by looking back to text or reading on.

R 3.5 Draw conclusions (e.g., from phrases, from simple sentences).

R 3.6 Complete a task (e.g., follow longer directions such as “Call Maria at home at 9 p.m.”).