Pearson

Alignment of the California ELD Standards to the Global Scale of English – An Overview

AUGUST 2025

Global Scale of English

Fast-track your progress

Contents

About the GSE 3

About The California English Language Development Standards 5

Alignment Methodology & Results 7

Sample Alignment 8

About the GSE

Pearson developed the Global Scale of English (GSE) to provide instructors and learners with a more granular understanding of English language proficiency. It has been designed to build learners' confidence by revealing exactly where they are on their learning journey and setting personalised goals to help them progress.

The GSE is an ecosystem that underpins the Pearson English Journey:

- **GSE Scale:** a proficiency scale from 10 to 90, with clear statements for what a learner can achieve in speaking, listening, reading, and writing at any point on the scale.
- **GSE Learning Objectives:** descriptions of what learners can do at each level of proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- **Courseware:** all of Pearson's English language learning courseware is developed using the GSE Learning Objectives.
- **Assessment:** institutions can develop their own assessment materials using the GSE Learning Objectives and Assessment Frameworks or choose one of Pearson's digital assessments which report on the GSE.

The GSE is the result of many years of research with more than 6,000 teachers from over 50 countries. It serves as a standard against which English language courses and assessments worldwide can be benchmarked.

It has been psychometrically aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference or CEFR (see De Jong, Mayor, & Hayes, 2016). The GSE complements and extends the CEFR by adding an extra layer of detail to the CEFR levels and providing thousands of additional learning objectives. This extra information helps learners understand where they are now and offers a step-by-step guide to where they want to go next. Using the GSE, teachers can match a student to course materials to suit their exact level and learning goals.

CEFR level	GSE Scale
Below A1	10–21
A1	22–29
A2	30–35
A2+	36–42
B1	43–50
B1+	51–58
B2	59–66
B2+	67–75
C1	76–84
C2	85–90

Table 1: The relationship between the GSE Scale and the CEFR

To address the specific needs of learners studying English for different purposes, GSE Learning Objectives have been developed for five different learner audiences:

- **adult:** adults studying on a general English course
- **academic:** adults studying academic English
- **professional:** adults studying English for the workplace
- **young learner:** English language learners aged 6–14
- **pre-primary:** English language learners aged 3–5

For more information:

pearson.com/languages/why-pearson/the-global-scale-of-english

About The California English Language Development Standards

The California English Language Development Standards (CA ELD Standards) provide a comprehensive framework to support educators in delivering effective instruction to English learners (ELs) from Kindergarten through Grade 12. These standards describe "what" ELs are expected to know and do in English and "how well" across three proficiency levels: Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging.

The CA ELD Standards are organized into three interrelated parts: Interacting in Meaningful Ways (collaborative, interpretive, and productive communication), Learning About How English Works (structuring cohesive texts, expanding and enriching ideas, and connecting and condensing ideas), and Using Foundational Literacy Skills. These parts are designed to guide instruction that is interactive, intellectually rich, and responsive to the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of ELs.

For more information about the CA ELD Standards and their implementation, visit the California Department of Education's English Language Development Standards **page**.

ELD Proficiency Level Continuum

Emerging	Expanding	Bridging
1. Exchanging information and ideas	**1. Exchanging information and ideas**	**1. Exchanging information and ideas**
Contribute to conversations and express ideas by asking and answering yes-no and wh- questions and responding using gestures, words, and learned phrases.	Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions, including sustained dialogue, by listening attentively, following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, and adding relevant information.	Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions, including sustained dialogue, by listening attentively, following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, adding pertinent information, building on responses, and providing useful feedback.

Table 2: An excerpt from the CA ELD Standards for Grade 2, Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways, Collaborative.

ELD Proficiency Level Continuum

Emerging	Expanding	Bridging
2. Interacting via written English	**2. Interacting via written English**	**2. Interacting via written English**
Collaborate with peers on joint writing projects of short informational and literary texts, using technology where appropriate for publishing, graphics, and the like.	Collaborate with peers on joint writing projects of longer informational and literary texts, using technology where appropriate for publishing, graphics, and the like.	Collaborate with peers on joint writing projects of a variety of longer informational and literary texts, using technology where appropriate for publishing, graphics, and the like.
3. Offering opinions	**3. Offering opinions**	**3. Offering opinions**
Offer opinions and negotiate with others in conversations using learned phrases (e.g., I think X), as well as open responses, in order to gain and/or hold the floor.	Offer opinions and negotiate with others in conversations using an expanded set of learned phrases (e.g., I agree with X, but X), as well as open responses, in order to gain and/or hold the floor, provide counterarguments, and the like.	Offer opinions and negotiate with others in conversations using a variety of learned phrases (e.g., That's a good idea, but X), as well as open responses, in order to gain and/or hold the foor, provide counterarguments, elaborate on an idea, and the like.

Table 2: Continued.

Alignment Methodology & Results

Each descriptor across the grades was aligned to one or more GSE Learning Objectives. In Grades K-8, GSE Young Learner Learning Objectives were used. Grades 9–12 were aligned to Adult Learning Objectives.

The results of the alignment show progression across ranges, reflecting the advancement from the beginner level towards proficiency.

	Kindergarten	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9–10	G11–12
GSE range	13–41	21–53	27–55	30–57	32–59	34–61	35–62	37–63	41–65	42–67	44–73

Table 3: Overall CA ELD Standards-GSE alignment by range.

Sample Alignment

The following table is an excerpt from the CA ELD Standards for Grade 2. It focuses on Part I, Interacting in Meaningful Ways, subsection A. Collaborative, in which the first point is *Exchanging information and ideas*. Each of the three proficiency continuum steps, Emerging, Expanding and Bridging, include one descriptor each under this point. The corresponding GSE Learning Objectives aligned to each descriptor are shown on the right.

Full alignment documentation is available on request via our website: **Educator sales enquiries | Pearson Languages**

Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways, Collaborative

1. Exchanging information and ideas

Proficiency Level Descriptor		GSE LO	GSE value
Emerging	I can request and provide information in conversations on familiar topics by creating simple sentences and asking appropriate follow-up questions.	Can answer short, simple questions related to basic personal information, using a single word or phrase.	19
		Can understand basic questions about what things are in their immediate surroundings or in pictures (e.g. 'What's this?').	22
		Can respond to simple statements or questions related to immediate personal needs.	28
		Can start and end a simple conversation using basic fixed expressions.	28
		Can ask simple questions about very familiar topics.	30
		Can take part in a very simple conversation on a familiar topic (e.g. their home, family, school) if the other speaker repeats questions as necessary and speaks slowly and clearly.	32

Table 4: An excerpt from CA ELD Standards for Grade 2 Part I, Collaborative, showing GSE alignments.

Proficiency Level Descriptor		GSE LO	GSE value
Expanding	Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions, including sustained dialogue, by listening attentively, following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, and adding relevant information.	Can talk about everyday activities using simple language.	34
		Can express their opinions on familiar topics, using simple language.	41
Bridging	Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions, including sustained dialogue, by listening attentively, following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, adding pertinent information, building on responses, and providing useful feedback.	Can explain the main points of an idea or problem.	52

Table 4: Continued.

Pearson