

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND ACTION 100

English Language Learners (ELL students) represent more than 10% of the nation’s K-12 enrollment and are the fastest growing segment of the K-12 student population. Over 40% of K-12 educators teach English Language Learners and do so in regular, ESL, Bilingual, and Dual-language classrooms. ELL students are a heterogeneous and complex, particularly vulnerable group, with differences in ethnic background, first language, socioeconomic status, quality of prior schooling, and levels of English proficiency.

ACTION 100 provides a coherent and comprehensive framework for accelerating the academic achievement and English language development of ELL students in grades PreK through 12. This document highlights the specific features and components of *ACTION 100* that make it ideal to address the needs of the diverse ELL student population in ways that are academically rigorous, systematic, and sustainable, and are consistent with the:

- recommendations of the WIDA Consortium’s *English Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners* (2007).
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers’ statement on the *Application of Common Core Standards for English Language Learners* (2011).
- IES Practice Guide on What Works ClearingHouse regarding *Effective Literacy and English Language Instruction for English Learners in the Elementary Grades* (2007).

1. A Leveling System of Readers and Text Built on the Common Core State Standards

The *Independent Reading Level Assessment* (IRLA) framework is a consolidated response to RtI and Common Core State Standards implementation. When it comes to the ELL population, the key is that identical standards are used for native English speakers and for English learners. Below grade-level performance in reading is no longer considered “normal” and it does not get neglected under the assumption that it will resolve itself when language proficiency in English improves. Further, it precludes Special Education from housing ELL students whose only “limitation” is that of striving to become proficient in a second language.

2. ACTION 100 as Formative Assessment within an RtI Model

- Every student is assessed to determine reading proficiency level using the Common Core State Standards for Reading, both in literature and informational text, as well as the Language standards key to reading success. English Language Learners at risk for reading problems are immediately identified. Progress is monitored daily, and recorded on *SchoolPace*, an online data tracker and management suite, through one-on-one conferencing and expert observation of literacy skills displayed throughout the school day.
- Data from daily progress monitoring drives instructional decisions and the alignment of human and material resources to meet the needs of individual students.
- 30 days of intensive Executive Coaching empower the school leadership to become instructional leaders in their buildings, and teachers (regular, Special Ed, and ESL) to function as trained literacy experts who:
 - o Use the Common Core State Standards-based IRLA as a tool of formative assessment to drive instruction.
 - o Implement high quality, effective, on-grade level Tier 1 instruction.
 - o Orchestrate and deliver successful Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, with the support of the leadership team, reading coaches, Title I personnel, volunteers, etc.
 - o Recognize the benefits of working together as a community of learners themselves under the common language, standards, and grade expectations established in the IRLA.
- *SchoolPace* provides all stake-holders access to real time reports, including Rate of Reading Growth by individual student, classroom, or subgroup.

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3. A Literacy Block Impacted by Best Practices

ACTION 100 incorporates best practices into the delivery of instruction effectively, independent of the particular core and ESL programs chosen by the district or school:

- Structured pair and small group activities, that use student partnering at different ability levels or different English language proficiency strategically and in ways that are mutually enriching.
- Small group and intensive one-to-one interventions targeted to address the unique and ever-changing needs of ELL students.
- State-of-the-art self-contained curriculum in reading, writing, and science inquiry (Zoology One) for students who enter kindergarten and first grade with weak reading and pre-reading skills.
- Daily, structured, standards-based practice in reading, writing, speaking and listening with a Readers' and Writers' Workshop format, preparing ELL students for proficiency on standardized testing and academic success beyond the Literacy block. Built-in modeling, teaching and re-teaching of focus skills by the teacher, accompanied by consistent, rigorous feedback from teacher and peers, ensure that ELL students have constant access to high-quality models of academic English beyond print.
- 30 minutes of monitored and structured daily independent reading practice, allowing ELL students to apply the focus skills as well as their individual target skills to self-selected books that match their actual reading proficiency level.

4. Volume Reading in the Context of Leveled Libraries

- Classrooms are flooded with hundreds of high-quality, age-appropriate trade books, organized into color-coded collections established on the basis of the literacy skills that, according to the CCS, are needed to successfully decode, comprehend and evaluate text of increasing complexity. The collections, presented in an easy-to-understand sequence, regularly rotate throughout the school to create a dynamic, engaging, literacy-rich learning environment.
- Student engagement and student choice are honored and encouraged, as they decide the books they *want* to read -from among the books that they *can* read- both in school and at home for a minimum of one hour every day.
- ELL students get repeated exposure through text, both literature and informational, to everyday vocabulary and syntactic structures that native speakers most likely already know and are not necessarily part of the academic curriculum. From reading level to reading level and from grade to grade, accelerated English language development ensues, and the capacity to acquire academic and domain-specific vocabulary increases dramatically, through extensive, successful engagement with the printed word.
- Carefully designed collections, chosen to represent a broad range of cultural traditions, mirror the talents, heritage practices and perspectives that ELLs bring with them to enrich their schools and communities. Multiculturalism and diversity are celebrated as the school becomes a community of avid readers engaged in critical thinking.

5. Subject and Academic Learning Sustained Beyond the Literacy Block

Other programs specifically developed to extend learning into the content areas of Science and Social Studies, with materials and learning strategies centered on thematic inquiry and Project-Based Learning:

Research Labs

Research Labs Express

Zoology One (for K-1)

Genre Studies (High School only)

Both an asset and a challenge, ELL students push the educational community to think creatively, act swiftly, and invest smartly, so that the full potential of each and every student is realized. ARC is committed to partnering with you in shaping what is best for your ELL population, as we prepare ELL students for lives of academic and career success and engagement as citizens. With an array of programs and tools and superb training in the effective management of your human and material capital, ARC has one and only one goal in mind: every child, every day, reading at or above grade-level.

ACTION 100 is also available en Español.