WIDA

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

WIDA Alternate ACCESS

User Guide for Sample Items

Contents

Overview

This document is intended to help test administrators and their students practice for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessment. It can also be used as a resource to help inform families, IEP teams, and other stakeholders about the test.

WIDA Alternate ACCESS

WIDA Alternate ACCESS *(Alternate ACCESS)* is an English language proficiency assessment for students who are identified by their IEP team as English learners (ELs) with the most significant cognitive disabilities. It is part of ACCESS for ELLs, a suite of secure, large-scale English language proficiency assessments in for kindergarten through grade 12 students who have been identified as ELs. Alternate ACCESS tests the four language domains of Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing, with items that align with the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards (wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld) and that target the WIDA alternate English language proficiency levels (see the Appendix for the Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors).

WIDA Alternate ACCESS is an individually administered paper and pencil test. It is intended only for ELs with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to meaningfully participate in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment, even with accommodations. Most students with disabilities who can demonstrate progress in their language development by taking ACCESS for ELLs with accommodations should continue to do so. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams must consider the following participation criteria to decide whether the WIDA Alternate ACCESS test would be an appropriate assessment for their student:

1. The student has been classified as EL.

2. The student has a significant cognitive disability and receives special education services under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004).

3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum.

4. The student is or will be participating in their statewide alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards.

Each individually administered domain test of the Alternate ACCESS is semi-adaptive, giving students the chance to respond to test content that is challenging enough to allow them to fully demonstrate their English language skills but not so difficult as to prevent them from showing any skills at all.

Training and Resources

Visit your member/state page of the WIDA website for any state- and district-specific testing guidance that applies to your students. See the Accessibility and Accommodations Manual (portal.wida.us/

resource/detail/5fafc1fb-24ca-eb11-a2df-0050568beee8) for information on administering the full Alternate ACCESS assessment. For training on administering WIDA Alternate ACCESS, visit the WIDA Secure Portal (portal.wida.us).

Sample Items

Sample items are useful as a tool to familiarize students and test administrators with the format and structure of actual test items and tasks. They are similar in difficulty to the items and tasks students complete on testing day, and they are a helpful preparation tool even for students who have taken the test in prior years. However, sample items do not simulate a complete testing experience. They do not cover the full range of content or performance level expectations students will encounter on Alternate ACCESS.

Sample items are not to be used as a screening or placement test. Though test administrators can use them to familiarize themselves with scoring processes, **students should not be graded for their performance on these samples.** WIDA does not advocate extensive test preparation for the Alternate ACCESS test, only acquainting students with the basic format of the test items.

Please note that specific test administration procedures are covered in the Test Administration Manual and test administrator training modules and presentations. This document should be used as a supplementary resource in addition to the training materials for professional development with test administrators and/or with students so that they may become familiar with the item types and format prior to testing.

Sample Test Materials

Alternate ACCESS sample test items are provided for grade-level clusters K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12, across the domains of Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing. Each item includes the following (please note: the test folders, page sizes and layout in these samples do not appear exactly as they will in Alternate ACCESS test booklets).

- A test administrator script. Contains everything you will say to guide students through the item.

- Test booklet pages. Contain the pictures and prompts students see for the Listening, Reading, and Speaking domain items.

- Student response pages (for Speaking and Writing). Contain space to mark scores for the Speaking domain items, and the pictures, prompts and response space for the Writing domain items.

Sample materials are each labeled with the domain, grade-level cluster, ELD standard, and proficiency level. For example: Reading, grade-level cluster 3-5, Language for Science, proficiency level 3-Developing.

Note: These sample items are designed for use in print, to reflect students' authentic testing experience. WIDA intends to take steps in the future to make versions that are web accessible.

Review these sample items before administering to gain a better understanding of the look, feel, and process of the Alternate ACCESS test. Use these items in any way that is helpful for you and your students. As part of your review, think about accommodations your students might need and any appropriate administration adaptations that might be necessary. See the Accessibility and Accommodations Manual (portal.wida.us/resource/detail/5fafc1fb-24ca-eb11-a2df-0050568beee8) for accommodation guidelines.

To administer Alternate ACCESS sample items, read through this document and set aside adequate time to explain each activity and allow students to answer the questions.

If you will be scribing or transcribing student responses, see the Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for information and guidelines.

Administering the Sample Items

Administer the sample items to approximate your student's actual testing experience. Any accommodations, assistive technology devices, or materials adaptation your student would use for Alternate ACCESS should also be available for practice items.

- Work in a quiet, familiar testing space with enough room to comfortably accommodate the student, yourself, and the test materials.

- Cover any posters that could assist or distract students during testing unless this change would be disruptive or distracting to your student.

- Ensure the student's preferred writing support, such as AAC or even scribing, is available for the Writing sample item.

For more information, visit Alternate ACCESS Sample Items (wida.wisc.edu/assess/alt-access/preparing/practice) on the WIDA website.

Accommodations

Alternate ACCESS offers several accommodations and a variety of accessibility features. All students need opportunities to familiarize themselves with any accessibility support they'll use during testing. Find details on allowed testing tools in the Accessibility and Accommodations Manual. (Keep in mind that many accommodations that are appropriate for other ACCESS for ELLs tests are not applicable for Alternate ACCESS because the whole test is administered by you and is not timed. For example, accommodations related to test audio and human readers do not apply to Alternate ACCESS.)

Universal tools that any student can use at any time on the test include:

- Audio aids
- Color overlays
- Highlighters, colored pencils, or crayons
- Line guides or tracking tools
- Magnifiers
- Scratch paper (if allowed by your state's policy)

Instructional Supports and Augmentative/Alternative Communication Devices

Individualized instructional supports that you're used to using with the student in everyday classroom instruction can be used during testing only if they do not change what is being tested. For example, do not provide graphic organizers, do not decrease the number of response choices you present to the student, and do not select or provide responses for the student.

An Augmentative/Alternate Communication (AAC) device is considered the student's voice, for testing purposes, and does not need to be documented as an accommodation. Because it is unusual for individual sounds to be programmed into speech-generating devices, any test item for which the student is asked to produce an isolated phoneme can be correctly answered by the student indicating a letter. For example, if you ask the student to say /g/, the student could indicate the letter G. Additionally, available vocabulary may impact a student's ability to respond to specific test items. For example, if a student is asked to identify an apple and the student does not have access to the word "apple" on their AAC, it is unreasonable to require the student to say, "apple." On multiple choice items, the student can indicate their response by indicating the letter or number of their response choice.

Never provide a special Alternate ACCESS page on a student's communication device just for the assessment. Such an arrangement would not be representative of the student's day-to-day skills with English language for academic contexts.

Adapting Materials

As needed and appropriate for the student, you can adapt the test booklet by cutting it apart and presenting the graphics in another format. For example, you might attach the answer choice options to an eye gaze board or mount them on foam core or blocks to give students a method of responding using a manipulative.

- If adapting the Test Booklet, you must present the item in the same layout and order as the original booklet.

- As a best practice, always keep the pieces of a disassembled practice booklet together and identify with the student's name.

Other Sample Item Administration Guidance

- Answer questions about test content, tools, and procedures.

- Rephrase test directions. If allowed under your state's testing policy, it's okay to translate test directions into the student's home language.

- Don't confirm or correct student responses.

Reading the Administrator Script

Read the sample test administrator script before administering the sample items. Familiarity with the script will help you present information naturally.

- Read aloud the text in bold and black font. These are the instructions for the students.

- Do not read any unbolded text aloud. These are directions for you, not for the students.

TASK 7

CUE A

Evergreens are trees that keep their leaves all year. Pine trees are a type of evergreen, and they have long, thin, and pointy leaves. People get wood and pinecones from pine trees.

Sweep across PICTURES. **What do people get from pine trees?** PAUSE.

If correct, go to *MOVING ON* box.

If incorrect or no response, repeat *CUE A*.
After repeat, if incorrect or no response, go to *CUE B*.

In the Listening script example above, you'll read the bolded sentences about evergreens. Then follow the instruction to sweep your finger across the pictures in the student's copy of the test item. You will read, **"What do people get from pine trees?"** and then you will pause. Proceed through the rest of the instructions, based on the student's response.

Note: The sample items are taken from the Alternate ACCESS Field Test. As such, they may contain numbering or stopping instructions that will not apply to using them for practice.

Administering Listening and Reading Items

Go through the following procedure for each item, pausing after each cue to let the student respond.

1. Follow the directions in the script to read through CUE A.

2. If the student responds correctly, follow the **stopping instructions** in the Moving On box. If the student responds incorrectly or does not respond, repeat CUE A.

3. If the student responds correctly, follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student responds incorrectly or does not respond to the repeated CUE A, read CUE B.

4. If the student responds correctly, follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student responds incorrectly or does not respond to CUE B, read CUE C.

5. Note the student's response and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If there are no stopping instructions, simply say, **"Good job. We are finished."**

Administering Speaking Items

Each task in the Speaking test is made up of three questions. You will transcribe and score student responses. The expectations of a student response at each proficiency level are detailed in the WIDA Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors, included in the Appendix of this guide.

QUESTION 1 of each task is aligned to the proficiency level of the item, and the proficiency level expectation for each Speaking task is listed in the Student Response Booklet. QUESTIONS 2 and 3 offer the student additional scaffolding and support. Test administrators will score Meets for the question that the student responds to appropriately. If the student does not meet the expectation for QUESTIONS 1, 2, and 3, then the test administrator will mark Approaches or No Response. Consult the table below for expectations at each proficiency level.

The specific proficiency level expectations are listed in the Student Response Booklet next to the scoring bubbles.

Transcribing

For both the Speaking and Writing tests, there is space provided in the Student Response Booklet for you to transcribe student responses. **Transcription is optional** and provides an opportunity to reflect on your scoring practice, and to look holistically at scoring across domains.

Capture the student's spoken response as well as any non-verbal communication that informed how you scored that response. For example, you may write, "Student used eye gaze to look at the tree" or "Student used AAC device to respond, Walk to store." If the student's speech is incomprehensible, write "Response was incomprehensible."

Task	Expect	Meets			Approaches	No Response	Not Administered
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
4	Q1: 1 or more simple statements or questions	◯					
	Q2: 1 or more simple statements or questions		◯				
	Q3: At least 1 intentional sound or word			◯			
					◯	◯	◯
Transcription of student response (optional):							

Administering

Go through the following procedure for each task. Pause after each question to let the student respond:

1. Follow the directions in the script to read QUESTION 1 and transcribe the student's response in the designated Transcription box.

2. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 1 located in the Student Response Booklet, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the **stopping instructions** in the Moving On box. If the student's response approaches the Expect Statement or the student does not respond, repeat QUESTION 1.

3. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 1, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response approaches the Expect Statement or the student does not respond to the repeated QUESTION 1, read QUESTION 2.

4. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 2, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response approaches the Expect Statement for QUESTION 2 or the student does not respond, repeat QUESTION 2.

5. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 2, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response approaches the Expect Statement for QUESTION 2 or the student does not respond to the repeated QUESTION 2, read QUESTION 3.

6. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 3, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response approaches the Expect Statement for QUESTION 3 or the student does not respond, repeat QUESTION 3.

7. If the student meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 3, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response does not meet the Expect Statement for QUESTION 3, fill in the Approaches bubble. If the student does not respond, mark the No Response bubble.

8. Follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If there are no stopping instructions, simply say, **"Good job. We are finished."**

Scoring

Mark a score that reflects the student's best response to a task. For example, if a student provides a response that approaches the scoring criteria and then provides no further response, give the student a score of Approaches for the task.

Fill in one oval per row in number 2 pencil:

- Fill in the **Meets** oval when the student's response meets or exceeds task level expectations. Expectations are listed in the Student Response Booklet next to the scoring bubbles.

- Fill in the **Approaches** oval after reading QUESTION 3, when the student provides a response and there is clear evidence that the demands of the task are beyond the student's current linguistic abilities. For example, if you ask for a word and the student simply vocalizes, that response is scored Approaches.

- Fill in the **No Response** oval when the student provides no verbal response in English.

Pronunciation is not evaluated in Speaking responses unless the student is providing a specific phoneme. For example, if a student says "all" instead of "ball," score the response as Meets because the student communicated a comprehensible response.

Administering Writing Items

For the Writing test, students interact directly with the Student Response Booklet. They can use their preferred writing instrument, and they can write in the booklet, on a separate piece of paper, or on any medium they typically use during instruction, provided the tool gives the student access to all 26 letters of the alphabet.

When a student uses an alternate device and does not write directly in the Student Response Booklet, you are allowed to scribe their responses. See transcription guidelines in the Accessibility and Accommodations Manual.

QUESTION 1 of each task is aligned to the proficiency level of the item, and the proficiency level expectation for each Writing task is listed in the Test Administrator Script by each scaffolded question.

QUESTIONS 2 and 3 offer the student additional scaffolding and support. Test administrators will score Meets for the question that the student responds to appropriately. If the student does not meet the expectation for QUESTIONS 1, 2, and 3, then the test administrator will mark Approaches or No Response. Consult the table below for expectations at each proficiency level.

Transcribing

For both the Speaking and Writing tests, there is space provided in the Student Response Booklet for you to transcribe student responses. **Transcription is optional** and provides an opportunity to reflect on your scoring practice, and to look holistically at scoring across domains.

Transcribe any student marks that may not be easily decipherable. If you include a transcription, please put quotation marks around it, so that independent reviewers can easily identify it. See the Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for additional information on transcription.

Administering

Go through the following procedure for each task, pausing after each question to let the student respond:

1. Follow the directions in the script to read QUESTION 1. Transcribe the student's response, if necessary.

2. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement in the Test Administrator Script, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response approaches the Expect Statement in the Test Administrator Script or the student does not respond, repeat QUESTION 1.

3. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement in the Test Administrator Script, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the **stopping instructions** in the Moving On box. If the student's response approaches the Expect Statement in the Test Administrator Script or the student does not respond to the repeated QUESTION 1, read QUESTION 2.

4. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 2, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response does not meet the Expect Statement for QUESTION 2 or the student does not respond, repeat QUESTION 2.

5. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 2, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response does not meet the Expect Statement for QUESTION 2 or the student does not respond to the repeated QUESTION 2, read QUESTION 3.

6. If the student's response meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 3, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response does not meet the Expect Statement for QUESTION 3 or the student does not respond, repeat QUESTION 3.

7. If the student meets the Expect Statement for QUESTION 3, mark the Student Response Booklet, and follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If the student's response does not meet the Expect Statement for QUESTION 3, fill in the Approaches bubble. If the student does not respond, mark the No Response bubble.

8. Follow the stopping instructions in the Moving On box. If there are no stopping instructions, simply say, **"Good job. We are finished."**

Scoring

Mark a score that reflects the student's best response to a task. For example, if a student provides a response that approaches the scoring criteria and then provides no further response, give the student a score of Approaches for the task.

Fill in one oval per row in number 2 pencil:

- Fill in the **Meets** oval when the student's response meets or exceeds the Expect Statement for the question. Expect Statements are listed in the Test Administrator Script under the prompt for each QUESTION.

- Fill in the **Approaches** oval only after administering all three questions and when the student provides a response, but there is clear evidence that the demands of the task are beyond the student's current linguistic abilities.

- Fill in the **No Response** oval when the student provides no written response in English.

Incorrect and phonetic spelling is acceptable as long as the errors do not impede your understanding of the student's response. For example, don't lower a student's score because the response includes the word "bal" instead of "ball." However, arbitrary letters and invented marks are not scorable. For example, "bLv" and "KQ" are not words, but "plnt" instead of "plant" or "bo" instead of "boy" can be scored as part of a written response.

Appendix: WIDA Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors

Listening

At each grade, toward the end of a given level of English language proficiency, and with individualized instruction, appropriate supports, accommodations, and communication tools,

English language learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities will use English to interpret and respond to the Discourse and Word/Phrase Dimensions for each of the proficiency levels described below.

Proficiency Level	Discourse Dimension Linguistic Complexity	Word/Phrase Dimension Vocabulary Usage
5 **Bridging**	A variety of connected and complex statements or questions across academic topics. Organized, related ideas across academic content areas.	Specific content area language A variety of academic contexts (e.g., across content areas).
4 **Expanding**	Compound connected conveyed expression(s) through one or more representations of language. Related, familiar ideas characteristic of academic content areas.	General and increasingly specific content area language. Increasingly expanding familiar and novel contexts.
3 **Developing**	Simple connected statements or questions. A familiar idea with an example.	General content words and expressions. Expanding familiar contexts.
2 **Emerging**	Simple conveyed expression(s). A single idea in expanding familiar contexts.	General high frequency and content-related words. Routine, shared contexts.
1 **Entering**	Routine and familiar conveyed expressions. An idea conveyed within familiar contexts.	Single representations of a conveyed expression. Intentional communication in concrete, immediate contexts.

Reading

At each grade, toward the end of a given level of English language proficiency, and with individualized instruction, appropriate supports, accommodations, and communication tools,

English language learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities will use English to interpret and respond to the Discourse and Word/Phrase Dimensions for each of the proficiency levels described below.

Proficiency Level	Discourse Dimension Linguistic Complexity	Word/Phrase Dimension Vocabulary Usage
5 **Bridging**	Connected text with a variety of sentences (e.g., simple, compound, and complex sentences). Organized related ideas across academic content areas.	Specific content area language. A variety of academic contexts (e.g., across content areas).
4 **Expanding**	Simple connected text. Related familiar ideas across content areas.	General and specific content area language. Increasingly expanding familiar and novel contexts.
3 **Developing**	Simple sentence or sentences. A familiar idea, an example.	General content words and expressions. Expanding familiar contexts.
2 **Emerging**	Multiple representations or short phrases. A single idea in expanding familiar contexts.	General high frequency and content-related words. Routine, shared contexts.
1 **Entering**	A single representation. An idea within words, phrases, or chunks of language in familiar contexts or in environmental print.	Single representations of letters or words. Familiar contexts or in environmental print.

Speaking

At each grade, toward the end of a given level of English language proficiency, and with individualized instruction, appropriate supports, accommodations, and communication tools, English language learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities will use English to produce the Discourse and Word/Phrase Dimensions for each of the proficiency levels described below.

Proficiency Level	Discourse Dimension Linguistic Complexity	Word/Phrase Dimension Vocabulary Usage
5 **Bridging**	A combination of short and expanded statements (at least two) across social and academic contexts with emerging complexity. New ideas in the context of familiar and novel content.	General and specific content area language. Increasingly expanding familiar and novel contexts.
4 **Expanding**	Two or more simple connected statements or questions. Expanded expression of one idea or emerging expression of multiple related ideas in particular content areas.	General content words and expressions. Expanding familiar contexts.
3 **Developing**	One or more simple statements or questions. Expression of one idea in particular content area.	General content–related words. Routine, shared contexts.
2 **Emerging**	Chunks of language and phrases (at least two). Emerging expression of a familiar idea.	General high-frequency and content-related words. Concrete, immediate contexts.
1 **Entering**	At least one intentional sound or word. Intentional communication of an idea.	Single representations of a spoken expression. Intentional communication in immediate contexts.

Writing

At each grade, toward the end of a given level of English language proficiency, and with individualized instruction, appropriate supports, accommodations, and communication tools, English language learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities will use English to produce the Discourse and Word/Phrase Dimensions for each of the proficiency levels described below.

Proficiency Level	Discourse Dimension Linguistic Complexity	Word/Phrase Dimension Vocabulary Usage
5 Bridging	Student writes at least two simple sentences or at least one compound sentence related to one or more ideas that reflect a coherent idea, concept, or experience. New ideas in the context of familiar and novel content.	General and specific content area language. Increasingly expanding familiar and novel contexts.
4 Expanding	The student writes one simple sentence related to an increasingly complex idea. Expanded expression of an idea in a particular content area.	General content words and expressions. Expanding familiar contexts.
3 Developing	The student writes one or more chunks of language, phrases, or clauses about an idea. Emerging expression of an idea in a particular content area.	General content–related words. Routine, shared contexts.
2 Emerging	The student writes a single word. Emerging expression of a familiar idea.	General high–frequency words. Concrete, immediate contexts.
1 Entering	The student writes one single representation of something (e.g., number, letter, symbol). Intentional written expression to convey meaning.	Single representations of words. Intentional communication in immediate contexts.