

Standardized Assessment Options for OSY

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Introduction to the *Standardized Assessment Options for OSY*

The *Standardized Assessment Options for OSY* is a list of standardized tests recommended for use by OSY programs. Language screeners like the *OSY English Language Screener* (found at www.osymigrant.org) are designed to make broad, initial decisions about where to begin instruction upon a student's entry into a program. Because screeners are brief and limited in scope, they are not able to provide detailed information about a student's academic needs, nor are they able to provide valid measures of learner progress. For these purposes, a standardized diagnostic assessment should be given.

All of the tests on the list can be used for determining where the student should begin, either in a particular level of class or in terms of instruction. In addition, these tests can all be used for gauging student learning progress. The teacher or program can give the student a pre-test before instruction takes place and then retest (post-test) after instruction has been given. Each test publisher has a recommended interval between pre- and post-tests. To see a score gain, it will be necessary for students to receive a significant amount of instruction. The more instruction time a student receives, the more likely it is that there will be a score gain.

For each assessment instrument, the following information is provided:

Type of Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of English and age (adult/young adult) the test could be used with • Notes on appropriateness for use with students who have low English literacy, low native-language literacy, or limited formal education.
Content of Test and Skills Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill areas addressed by the test (e.g., listening, speaking, reading, writing, Spanish, or math) • Context (life skills or academic skills) • Description of test items
Test Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group and/or one-on-one test administration • Manner of testing: paper-pencil, computer, and/or online • Time for testing (does not include scoring time) • Description of what the tester and students do during test
Test Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Low</i> no or low per-test cost (under \$3 per test) or less than \$100 total outlay for start-up <i>Moderate</i> moderate per-test cost (\$3-\$10 per test) or a start-up cost of \$100-\$300 <i>High</i> individual test cost is more than \$10 per test or the cost of purchasing start-up test materials is above \$300 • Test materials programs will need to purchase
Training for Testers	How testers can learn how to administer the test and any other tester requirements. If free training is known to be available, it is noted; otherwise, there may be costs associated with training.
Advantages and Disadvantages for MEPs	Comments regarding ease of administration, tester training, and/or test design limitations

Q: *How were the tests on the list selected?*

A: The tests were selected according to several criteria: usability with English language learners (ELLs) who may have little formal education or low literacy skills, ease of administration, cost, amount of time needed for testing, and manageable tester training requirements. While there are other published tests available, the tests on the list are the tools that are likely to be practical for using with OSY.

Q: *Can anyone give these standardized tests?*

A: Volunteers, support staff, or teachers can give these tests if they have been trained. Many of the tests on this list have a tester manual with complete instructions for a tester to follow. Other tests require formal online or in-person training. Testers need to follow the test publisher's training requirements and test procedures carefully; otherwise, the test results will be invalid.

Q: *How often can I retest?*

A: Standardized tests like those on the list are designed to be used before instruction begins, to give teachers information on the skills a student needs to work on. Each test publisher has a recommended interval between pre- and post-tests. The more instruction time a student receives, the more likely it is that there will be a score gain. It is usually necessary for students to receive a significant amount of instruction before achieving a gain.

Q: *Can these tests be used to determine student progress?*

A: These tests assess skills that are typically taught in adult ESL or adult basic education programs. Some test life skills such as addressing an envelope, reading a calendar, or responding to a conversational question, while others test academic skills such as reading non-fiction passages, defining vocabulary, or carrying out basic mathematical computations. These tests can show general learner progress when there is sufficient time between tests. Any increase in a raw score (the number correct) on a standardized test is an indication of learning progress; however, if a post-test score is the same or lower than a pre-test score, it does not mean there has been no progress. The student could have had a bad day when taking the post-test, or the content of test may not reflect what was taught in class.

Q: *What are some other ways I can demonstrate student progress?*

A: Teachers can track and demonstrate student progress in many ways, including:

- Keeping files of students' written work (quizzes, tests, worksheets from class work and homework)
- Maintaining notes on student performance using simple rubrics such as the rubrics used for scoring the *OSY English Language Screener*
- Interviewing the student periodically to note learning goals and achievements
- Recording or videotaping the student during oral activities (conversation, presentations, dialogues or role plays) at the beginning of an instructional period and again after at least 20 hours of instruction

Q: *Can I use these tests with students who are not very literate in English or their native language, or with students who have little formal education?*

A: Some of the tests can readily be used with students who lack literacy skills or who are unfamiliar with typical test formats due to lack of formal education. Other tests have instructions or test question formats that may be confusing to such students. Please refer to the column "Type of Student" for notes about the use of specific tests with these students. It is often helpful to prepare students in class for the format and content of standardized tests by showing them some sample questions (if available) or having them do tasks similar to those on the test. Teachers should not show students the exact test questions or go over answers. That is considered "teaching to the test" and will result in invalid test scores.

Standardized Assessment Options for OSY

Cost Key

Low	no or low per-test cost (under \$3 per test) or less than \$100 total outlay for start-up
Moderate	moderate per-test cost (\$3-\$10 per test) or a start-up cost of \$100-300
High	individual test cost is more than \$10 per test or the cost of purchasing start-up test materials is above \$300

BEST Literacy (Basic English Skills Test)

Center for Applied Linguistics <http://www.cal.org/aea/bestliteracy/index.html>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning through high intermediate ESL adult or young adult learners Appropriate for ELLs with low literacy and/or limited education 	Tests basic reading and writing skills in a life skills context (e.g., reading calendars and labels, completing forms, writing notes)	Paper-pencil Given to a group or to individuals Students write their answers directly in test booklets. Testers must hand-score each test. Time: One hour	Cost: Low <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumable test booklets (3 forms available to alternate for pre- and post-testing) Tester manual 	Self-training with manual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advantages for MEPs: Easy to give. Does not require that students have literacy or test-taking skills. Disadvantages for MEPs: Designed for beginning and intermediate ELLs. Not valid for advanced ELLs. Scoring is labor intensive and can take up to 10 minutes per test. Testers must follow manual for scoring. 				

BEST Plus

Center for Applied Linguistics <http://www.cal.org/aea/bestplus/index.html>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning through advanced ESL adult or young adult learners • Appropriate for ELLs with low literacy and/or limited education 	<p>Tests listening and speaking in a life skills context (e.g., students answer questions on topics such as work, family, and community)</p>	<p>Oral interview</p> <p>Given one-on-one</p> <p>Both a computer-adaptive and a paper-based semi-adaptive format are available</p> <p>In the computer-adaptive version, the tester interviews the student and scores each question directly on computer as the test proceeds. The computer produces a score report upon completion of the test.</p> <p>For the paper-based version, the tester asks questions orally and records scores in test booklet as test proceeds. After the test, the tester enters the scores into a computer to get a score report.</p> <p>Time: 12-20 minutes per student</p>	<p>Cost: Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumable electronic tests • Tester manual • Tester picture cue book (for paper-based version) 	<p>Must be trained and approved by a certified BEST Plus trainer.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages for MEPs: Can be used with all levels. Does not require that students have literacy or test-taking skills. • Disadvantages for MEPs: Training takes several hours and may not be available locally. For the computer-adaptive version, the tester must have a computer to use while testing. For the paper-based version, the tester must have access to a computer following testing. 				

CASAS Beginning Literacy Reading (Forms 27 & 28)

CASAS <https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/beginning-literacy-reading>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning ESL adult or young adult learners • Appropriate for ELLs with very low literacy, little knowledge of English and/or limited education 	<p>Tests very basic literacy skills, such as letter and word recognition</p>	<p>Paper-pencil</p> <p>Given to a group or to individuals</p> <p>Students write their answers directly in test booklets. Testers must hand-score each test.</p> <p>Time: One hour</p>	<p>Cost: Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumable test booklets 	<p>CASAS Implementation Training required by one person in the program, who can then train others. Free Implementation Training available online.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages for MEPs: Easy to give. Does not require that students have literacy or test-taking skills. • Disadvantages for MEPs: Limited to beginning level ESL. 				

CASAS Life & Work Listening

CASAS <https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/life-and-work-listening>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning through advanced ESL adult or young adult learners ELLs must be familiar with a multiple choice format 	<p>Tests listening in life skills and employment contexts (e.g., listening comprehension in a doctor's office, understanding instructions on the job)</p>	<p>Both a paper-pencil version and an electronic version, the eTest (web or desktop delivery) are available</p> <p>For the paper-pencil version, the tester uses a CD to play the questions while the student records answers on an answer sheet. For the electronic version, the student listens to the questions with headphones.</p> <p>Given to a group or to individuals</p> <p>Test is given after an Appraisal test (or eTest Locator) to determine which test level to give</p> <p>Time: Appraisal: 30 minutes Test: One hour</p>	<p>Cost of paper-pencil version: High for initial start-up materials, low per-test cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reusable test booklets for the low level only. For other levels, no test booklets are used Appraisal test or eTest Locator (to determine which test level to give initially) Audio CDs for each level Answer sheets Tester manual <p>Cost of electronic version (eTest): Low</p>	<p>CASAS Implementation Training required by one person in the program, who can then train others. Free Implementation Training available online.</p> <p>Electronic version (eTest) requires additional free online training</p> <p>Sample audio questions available for practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to give and score. Can be used with all ESL levels. Sample audio questions available online for student practice. Electronic version is automatically scored and generates a score report. Disadvantages for MEPs: Paper-pencil version requires use of audio CDs, necessitating a very quiet environment for testing. Paper-pencil version requires numerous components (appraisal test and multiple levels of CDs, and test booklets). Electronic version (eTest) requires computer access with headphones for students and requires students to have very basic computer skills. 				

CASAS Life & Work Reading

CASAS <https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/life-and-work-reading>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning through advanced ESL adult or young adult learners ELLs must be familiar with a multiple choice format 	<p>Tests reading in life skills and employment contexts (e.g., reading schedules, instructions, letters)</p>	<p>Both a paper-pencil version and an electronic version, the eTest (web or desktop delivery) are available</p> <p>Given to a group or to individuals</p> <p>Test is given after an Appraisal test (or eTest Locator) to determine which test level to give</p> <p>Time: Appraisal: 30 minutes Test: One hour</p>	<p>Cost of paper-pencil version: High for initial start-up materials, low per-test cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reusable test books in several levels (can be ordered in sets with all levels included in small quantities) Appraisal test or eTest Locator (to determine which test level to give initially) Answer sheets Tester manual <p>Cost of electronic version (eTest): Low</p>	<p>CASAS Implementation Training required by one person in the program, who can then train others. Free Implementation Training available online.</p> <p>Electronic version (eTest) requires additional free online training</p> <p>Sample questions available for practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advantages for MEPs: Easy to give and score. Can be used with all ESL levels. Sample questions available online for student practice. Electronic version is automatically scored and generates a score report. Disadvantages for MEPs: Paper-pencil version requires use of numerous components (appraisal test and multiple levels of tests). Electronic version (eTest) requires computer access for students and requires students to have very basic computer skills. 				

DAR (Diagnostic Assessment of Reading)

Riverside Publishers <http://www.riverpub.com/products/dar/index.html>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning to advanced ESL adult or young adult learners Appropriate for ELLs who have low literacy skills or limited education; however, students will need high beginning oral language skills to understand instructions 	Tests reading skills in an academic context (e.g., word decoding, reading passages to demonstrate fluency, defining vocabulary words)	<p>Given one-on-one orally</p> <p>Tester gives student instructions to read word lists, read passages aloud, etc., and records scores in a consumable test booklet. Student answers multiple choice items in test booklet as well.</p> <p>Time: 40-45 minutes per student</p>	<p>Cost: Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumable test booklets (two forms available for alternating pre- and post-testing) Tester manual 	Self-training with manual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advantages for MEPs: Tests all reading skills in short, separate tests. Testers can use all the tests or select specific ones. 				

ESLOA (ESL Oral Assessment)

New Readers Press <http://www.newreaderspress.com/Items.aspx?hierId=4090>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning to intermediate ESL adult or young adult learners Appropriate for ELLs with low literacy and/or limited education 	Tests basic listening and speaking skills in a life skills context (e.g., describing pictures, answering basic questions)	<p>Given one-on-one</p> <p>Time: 10-20 minutes per student</p>	<p>Cost: Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tester manual (includes instructions and test items) Answer sheets 	Self-training with manual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advantages for MEPs: Easy to give. Does not require that students have literacy or test-taking skills. Disadvantages for MEPs: Designed for beginning and intermediate ELLs. Not valid for advanced ELLs. It has not been normed, but is widely used in volunteer tutoring programs. 				

Gates-MacGinitie AR (Adult Reading)

Riverside Publishers <http://www.riverpub.com/products/gmrt/details.html>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High intermediate to advanced ESL adult or young adult learners • Not appropriate for ELLs with low literacy and limited education 	Tests academic reading vocabulary and comprehension	Can be given online or paper-pencil Given to a group or individuals Students work from reusable or consumable test booklets Time: 75-100 minutes	Cost: Moderate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumable or reusable test booklets • Tester manual 	Self-training with manual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages for MEPs: Easy to give and score. Test publisher has linked classroom resource manual on how to teach reading. • Disadvantages for MEPs: Test is not specifically designed for ELLs. Publisher requires purchasers to complete a form showing credentials for testing. http://www.riverpub.com/pdfs/qform.pdf 				

READ (Reading Evaluation-Adult Diagnosis)

New Readers Press <http://www.newreaderspress.com/Items.aspx?hierId=4070>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low intermediate to advanced ESL adult or young adult learners • Appropriate for ELLs who have basic literacy skills in English 	Tests basic reading skills (e.g., sight words, word identification, oral reading fluency, listening comprehension)	Given one-on-one orally Time: 10-20 minutes per student	Cost: Low <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tester manual (includes instructions and test items) • Answer sheets 	Self-training with manual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages for MEPs: Easy to give. • Disadvantages for MEPs: Not appropriate for low-level ELLs. Designed for low-literacy native English speakers. Has not been normed, but is widely used in volunteer tutoring programs. 				

Stanford English Language Proficiency Test (SELP)

Pearson <http://www.pearsonassessments.com/learningassessments/products/100000659/stanford-english-language-proficiency-test-selp.html>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning to advanced ESL adult or young adult learners Appropriate for ELLs who have low literacy skills or limited education 	Tests listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in an academic context. Students hear prompts and answer questions about them, answer multiple choice questions on reading passages, answer questions orally, etc.	Paper-pencil Given one-on-one Student uses reusable test booklet and records answers on an answer sheet Time: 40 minutes to 2 hours per student	Cost: Moderate for initial purchase of materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reusable test books in multiple levels Answer sheets Tester manual 	Self-training with manual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advantages for MEPs: Tests all English language skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking. Disadvantages for MEPs: Designed for K-12, so many test items are child or youth-oriented. 				

TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education)

CTB/McGraw-Hill <http://www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/productFamilyViewAction?productFamilyId=608&p=products>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High intermediate to advanced ESL adult or young adult learners • Not appropriate for ELLs with low literacy and limited education 	<p>Tests academic reading and math skills (with separate tests)</p>	<p>Both a paper-pencil version and an electronic version, the TABE Adaptive Online (web and computer delivery) are available</p> <p>Given to a group or to individuals</p> <p>For the paper-pencil version, the student uses a reusable test booklet and records answers on an answer sheet</p> <p>Test is available in two lengths, Complete Battery and Survey (half as long). Test is given after an initial Locator test to determine which test level to give.</p> <p>Reading and math tests are given separately</p> <p>Time: Locator: 20 minutes Complete Battery: 50 minutes Survey: 25 minutes</p>	<p>Cost: High for initial purchase of pencil-paper materials, low per-test cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable test books in several levels (two forms available for alternating pre- and post-testing) • Locator test (to determine which test level to give initially) • Answer sheets • Tester manual <p>Cost for electronic version (TABE Adaptive Online): high, minimum order required</p>	<p>Self-training with manual for pencil-paper test</p> <p>Training available from publisher for electronic version (TABE Adaptive Online)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages for MEPs: Widely used to test reading and math. TABE scores may be of use in helping determine need for basic skills instruction beyond ESL. • Disadvantages for MEPs: Designed for ABE learners who are native English speakers or who have strong English skills. Not valid for lower-level ESL learners. Requires use of numerous components (locator test and multiple levels of tests). 				

Tests of Native Spanish Language Skills

CASAS Spanish Reading Comprehension Test (Evaluación de Comprensión de la Lectura)

CASAS <https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/spanish-assessment>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<p>Native Spanish speakers who have had 3-9 years of school in their native country</p>	<p>Tests Spanish reading skills in a life skills context (e.g., reading signs, newspapers, etc.)</p>	<p>Paper-pencil</p> <p>Given to groups or to individuals</p> <p>Student uses reusable test booklet and records answers on an answer sheet</p> <p>Time: 50 minutes</p>	<p>Cost: Moderate for initial purchase of materials, low per-test cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable test booklets (two forms are available for alternating pre- and post-testing) • Answer sheets • Tester manual 	<p>Self-training with manual</p> <p>Unlike some other CASAS assessments, does not require CASAS Implementation Training</p>
<p>• Advantages for MEPs: Easy to give and score. Designed for native Spanish speakers who may have limited formal education.</p>				

Stanford Spanish Language Proficiency Test (SSLP)

Pearson <http://www.pearsonassessments.com/learningassessments/products/100000524/stanford-spanish-language-proficiency-test-sslp.html>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
Native Spanish speakers	Tests Spanish listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in an academic context. Students hear prompts and answer questions about them, answer multiple choice questions on reading passages, answer questions orally, etc.	Paper-pencil Given one-on-one Student uses reusable test booklet and records answers on an answer sheet Time: 40 minutes to 2 hours per student	Cost: Moderate for initial purchase of materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable test books in multiple levels • Answer sheets • Tester manual 	Self-training with manual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages for MEPs: Tests all Spanish language skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking. • Disadvantages for MEPs: Testers must be proficient in Spanish and English. Designed for K-12, so many test items are child or youth-oriented. 				

TABE Español

CTB/McGraw Hill <https://www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/ctbProductViewAction?p=products&productId=8042>

Type of Student	Content of Test and Skills Assessed	Test Procedures	Test Components and Cost (See Key Above)	Training for Testers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native Spanish speakers • Learners need to be familiar with multiple choice test format 	<p>Tests Spanish academic reading and math skills (on separate tests)</p>	<p>Paper-pencil or on a local computer</p> <p>Can be given to groups or to individuals</p> <p>Student uses reusable test booklet and records answers on an answer sheet</p> <p>Test is available in two lengths, Complete Battery and Survey (half as long). Test is given after a Locator test to determine which test level to give.</p> <p>Reading and math tests are given separately</p> <p>Time: Locator: 20 minutes Complete Battery: 50 minutes Survey: 25 minutes</p>	<p>Cost: High for initial purchase of materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable test books in two levels • Locator test (to determine which test level to give initially) • Answer sheets • Tester manual 	<p>Self-training with manual</p> <p>Testers need to be proficient in Spanish and English</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages for MEPs: Tests Spanish academic skills. • Disadvantages for MEPs: Testers must be proficient in Spanish and English. 				