

English Language Proficiency Assessments for California Non-embedded American Sign Language Guidelines

Introduction:

The English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) is intended to measure students' English language proficiency. American Sign Language (ASL) is an allowable accommodation on the ELPAC. To enhance the administration of the ELPAC with an ASL accommodation provided by a human signer (or interpreter, henceforth, signer), the following guidelines are recommended:

1. Signers are expected to meet California's qualifications for educational sign interpreters or sign support specialists, as well as any specific procedures required for the ELPAC. Educational Interpreter Regulations can be found at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/lr/om061108.asp>.
2. Signers are expected to meet any specific local educational agency requirements to qualify as a signer for the ELPAC content.
3. Signers are expected to be familiar with the ELPAC grade level or grade-span content, *Directions for Administration (DFA)*, and testing procedures, prior to the administration. Attendance at one of the annual ELPAC training sessions will provide signers with information on the ELPAC Administration.
4. Signers must sign the ELPAC Test Security Affidavit prior to the administration of the ELPAC.

Test Administration:

Test Security: Signers need to (a) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, (b) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content, and (c) shred, hold, or return all materials as directed in the ELPAC Test Administration Manual.

Accessibility Resources: Signers should ensure that any and all other needed documented supports and accessibility resources are available to the student. If the designated signer is to provide other supports, he or she must be qualified to do so. If the signer cannot provide additional documented resources or accommodations, indicate that another person must be available to provide them to the student.

Academic ASL: The signer should use academic ASL, and avoid using regional signs, slang terms, and other nonstandard vocabulary items.

The signing of items should

- Adhere only to the information included in the DFA
- Provide meaning and support of the written English item and avoiding cueing, cluing, and elaboration beyond the written item

- Be based on traditional ASL conventions for presenting content, especially if the item content is complex (e.g., the diamond structure)

Presentation: Clear visibility is of utmost importance when providing ASL accommodations. Signers should

- Wear plain shirts (ideally long-sleeved)
 - Signers should not wear flashy clothing (e.g., stripes or patterns) or clothing that blends in with the skin tone of the ASL signer
- Remove watches and jewelry to minimize distraction
- Face the student directly when signing content except in instances when body position is critical to communicate meaning appropriate to the item context (e.g., plurality strategy)

Fingerspelling: Signers may use fingerspelling as a general strategy to support the comprehension of the ASL accommodation. Additional considerations are as follows:

- Use fingerspelling in a limited fashion
 - To reduce the cognitive complexity of the signed content; keeping in mind that the word must not be changed or altered. Fingerspelling does not allow the translator to expand on the word
 - When students are unlikely to be familiar with an ASL sign, the ASL term should be signed first and then followed by the finger spelled English equivalent
- DO NOT use fingerspelling when it might unintentionally cue students to an answer because fingerspelling directly “looks like English”

Domain-Specific Instructions for ELPAC:

Listening: ASL should be provided for Listening stimuli, stems, and options. In kindergarten through grade two, the student will sign a response to a signer, who will enter the response. In grades three through twelve, the student can enter the response or sign the response to a signer.

Speaking: ASL should be provided for directions. ASL should be provided for Speaking stimuli and prompts.

Reading: ASL should be provided for directions. ASL should **not** be provided for Reading passages, stems, or options. The student can enter the response or sign the response to a signer.

Writing: Any directions for which audio is provided should also be provided in ASL. Any part of the Writing prompts that are not normally read should not be signed. The only means for a student to access the prompts is to read them in English. Students should either keyboard or handwrite their responses to constructed response items, unless the ASL accommodation is used in conjunction with the scribe accommodation.