

This English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum is designed to provide learning opportunities in the English language and the American culture for students in grades K to 8 who are identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) or English Language Learners (ELLs). It is created to meet the needs of such students regardless of the English language proficiency level they demonstrate.

Learning to speak, read and comprehend spoken and written English is crucial for newcomers to the American education experience. Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that “children who are limited English proficient attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.”

Students come to classrooms with different interests and varying intelligences and learning styles. Instructional activities and assessments should reflect these needs. Basing instruction on meaningful communicative tasks motivates students to learn a second language. The teacher’s role is to facilitate genuine interaction among students through classroom activities that are embedded in authentic real-life contexts.

Culture is an integral part of learning a new language. Communication is actually the ability to use language in culturally sensitive ways. Teaching the everyday culture of native speakers of the language not only makes the language come alive but also fosters respect and appreciation of cultural diversity. Students learn to recognize that they are products of their own culture and learn how to assimilate into the American culture without denying their cultural roots.

This curriculum is based on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for English Language Proficiency. The State Standards are derived from the standards developed by the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium. New Jersey standards focus on the use of English to achieve academically in all content areas. The State Standards also reflect the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts Literacy but from the perspective of second language acquisition.