



# New York State Testing Program

2006

## NYSESLAT

LISTENING

READING

WRITING

GRADES

K-1



**DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION**



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# Table of Contents

<b>Letter to Teachers</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test	5
What the NYSESLAT Assesses	6
<b>General Directions for Administration</b>	<b>8</b>
Preliminary Planning	8
Directions for Coding Demographic Page	9
Materials Required by the Examiner	10
Materials Required by Each Student	10
Proposed Schedule for Administration	11
NYSESLAT Estimated Testing Times	12
After Testing	13
NYSESLAT Writing Rubrics	15

Dear Teacher:

Harcourt is pleased to be working in partnership with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to produce the *New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test* (NYSESLAT). The NYSESLAT was developed by the NYSED and is based on the New York State Learning Standards for English as a Second Language. The NYSESLAT is used to assess the progress of limited English proficient (LEP) students, as required by Title I and Title III of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act of 2001.

The general design of the NYSESLAT is based on current research from the field of second language assessment, guidance from an English as a Second Language (ESL) expert Advisory Board, and direction from the NYSED. Review committees comprising ESL teachers from districts around New York State are responsible for providing feedback on individual forms that are administered each year. A committee reviews all the reading passages that appear in the NYSESLAT. A committee made up of several dozen teachers intensively reviews and makes revisions to the test items proposed for use in the NYSESLAT in the upcoming school year. Based on the contributions of all involved, we believe that the NYSESLAT is responsive to the needs of LEP/ELL students and their teachers.

Sincerely,  
Harcourt Assessment, Inc.

## Introduction

The NYSESLAT is a state-of-the-art assessment that addresses the unique needs of limited English proficient/English language learners (LEP/ELLs) by modeling best testing practices and critical instructional standards.

NYSESLAT's goal is to measure the English language proficiency level of students learning ESL in the United States in oral and written language—listening and speaking, reading and writing skills. The NYSESLAT is an annual assessment to measure the progress of students attaining English proficiency. The NYSESLAT can also be used as an indicator of program efficacy to determine whether LEP/ELL students are receiving the necessary instruction to meet challenging state standards.

### New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test

The NYSESLAT assesses the general ability levels of students in critical English language skills through the following:

- Listening and Reading multiple-choice tests
- Writing in three sections: Writing Conventions, which is a multiple-choice test, and Pre-Writing and Writing, which are both constructed-response tests
- Speaking, an individually administered set of performance tasks scored by the teacher

The NYSESLAT incorporates attractive full-color graphics, different types of tasks and ways of scoring, appropriate vocabulary, and relevant topics that meaningfully engage and motivate LEP/ELLs to demonstrate their full potential in regard to language proficiency.

## What the NYSESLAT Assesses

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The content domains or conceptual framework underlying the NYSESLAT is presented below.

### Speaking

The Speaking subtest is made up of individually administered questions requiring students to give a short spoken response. In order to elicit as large a speaking sample as possible, as well as to elicit a variety of discourse, the Speaking subtest consists of four different speaking tasks. The test begins with three simple, unscored warm-up questions. For the first task, students repeat/read aloud a word, phrase, or sentence. The purpose of this task is to assess pronunciation, rate of speech, intonation, and general intelligibility. The second task requires students to listen to and/or read the beginning of a sentence and then complete the sentence. A picture stimulus helps the student generate ideas for an appropriate response. The third speaking task is storytelling, which elicits longer discourse from students. This task allows students to demonstrate their ability to provide more elaborate descriptions and to show relationships between ideas. Additionally, accuracy of language, lexical appropriateness, and structure are measured. The fourth speaking task, social interaction, assesses students' sociolinguistic competence. This section consists of short conversational gambits. The student hears the first part of a mini-conversation that requires a rejoinder and then responds with a single sentence.

### Writing

The Writing subtest for level K–1 has two sections: Writing Conventions and Writing. Writing Conventions is a group-administered, multiple-choice assessment. It measures students' understanding of phonemes and associated letters of the alphabet. The Writing section is a group-administered, open-ended assessment. It has several item types representing various stages of writing development, from copying sentences to extended writing. The focus is on students' ability to form letters and words at the lower proficiency levels and communicate ideas at the higher levels.

For levels 2–12, the Writing subtest comprises three sections: Writing Conventions, Pre-Writing, and Writing. Writing Conventions is a group-administered, multiple-choice assessment. It measures students' achievement in applying the principles that form effective writing, which include understanding English language structure, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

The Pre-Writing section is a set of group-administered questions related to the Writing prompt that requires a short written response. This section models the writing process and allows students to formulate ideas that can be used in their extended response to the Writing prompt. The focus of the Pre-Writing section is on the generation of ideas rather than form.

The Writing section is a group-administered, open-ended, direct writing assessment employing graphics-based prompts. This assessment goes beyond sentence-level skills and measures abilities that cannot easily be assessed with multiple-choice questions. These abilities include using appropriate and precise vocabulary, constructing sentences that are varied in structure and length, and organizing sentences into paragraphs.

## Reading

The Reading subtest is a group-administered, multiple-choice assessment. It is a comprehensive and balanced reading assessment that includes measures in three areas: decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension. The first section of the Reading subtest represents the most basic reading skills, simple word and sentence recognition, while the next section focuses on comprehension.

### *Reading Passages*

Reading passages, consisting of literary, informational, and functional pieces, were written by published authors of literature for children and young adults. The passages have been constructed to be accessible to second language learners. The NYSESLAT reading selections closely resemble the kinds of materials students read in school and in everyday life. Illustrations help students focus attention on the task, recall and activate prior knowledge, and set purposes for reading. Each grade span of the NYSESLAT contains a graduated difficulty of texts, with the final passage being more comparable to an on-grade text for native English speakers.

### *Reading Objectives*

The reading objectives measured are initial understanding, interpretation, and vocabulary/idioms in context. The questions in the Reading subtest are designed to mirror the developmental, process-oriented nature of good reading instruction and the kinds of materials used in exemplary programs. There are questions designed to measure students' abilities to understand directly stated details or relationships and to measure students' abilities to extend meaning and to infer relationships among the ideas suggested by the text. There are also questions in which students must predict meanings of unknown words or idioms from clues in surrounding text.

## Listening

The goal of the Listening subtest is to assess comprehension of authentic conversational English. It is a group-administered, multiple-choice assessment. The focus of comprehension begins at the word level and proceeds to the sentence level and then to longer discourse. At the K–1 level, students listen to questions and short speeches and choose the correct answer from three graphics. In addition to this kind of question, which is also employed at all the other levels, students listen to longer speeches and answer both oral and printed questions. At all levels except K–1, students also respond to task-based items. A scenario and large graphic provide a context for a set of task-based questions. Students listen to short speeches and are asked to “perform a task.” The four answer options are graphics. This process requires students to comprehend and synthesize the information they hear.

# General Directions for Administration

The person responsible for administering the NYSESLAT must be a certified teacher or administrator, able to carry out standard examination procedures, and should have special training in administering the NYSESLAT. To ensure accurate and reliable results, the examiner should become thoroughly familiar with these procedures before attempting to administer the test.

## Preliminary Planning

1. Familiarize yourself with the test booklets by reading through them and actually taking the tests.
2. Read the Specific Directions for Administration thoroughly before administering the test to the students.
3. Prepare your LEP/ELL students for taking the test. Most students at the lower grades are inexperienced at taking standardized tests. Therefore, a pretest orientation is suggested so that students can earn scores that reflect their true ability. The NYSESLAT Test Samplers are available for this purpose. The Test Samplers can be found online at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/nyseslat/home.shtml>. Tell students about the skills they will use in the NYSESLAT Listening, Reading, and Writing subtests. Explain that they will listen to short sentences and conversations and then answer questions about them. They will read short sentences and answer questions about them. Students will answer questions that assess their writing skills.
4. Make sure the physical conditions in the testing room are satisfactory. There should be adequate lighting for all students, and students should be seated so that there is enough space between them. If necessary, post a “Testing—Do Not Disturb” sign on the door. If the group is larger than a normal-sized class, there should be one assistant for every twenty-five students. Refer to your NYSESLAT School Administrator’s Manual for more information regarding testing conditions.
5. Fill in the demographic information required on the NYSESLAT answer sheet if they are not pre-filled or if you have a new entrant. Verify students’ birth dates by checking their permanent records. Be sure to use a soft-lead (No. 2) pencil to code the information.

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR K–1 TEACHERS/ADMINISTRATORS

Students at the K–1 level will mark their answers in their test booklets. A teacher or aide must transcribe the students’ responses onto the machine-scorable answer sheet exactly as the students recorded them in the test booklets.

## Directions for Coding Demographic Page

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Complete the demographic information on each student's answer sheet prior to testing.

Directions:

- Use a No. 2 pencil only.
- Darken the circle completely.
- Erase cleanly any mark you wish to change.
- Do not make any stray marks on this form.

### **Student's Name**

In the boxes labeled **Student's Last Name**, print the student's last name. Fill in the appropriate circle in the column below each letter entered. In the boxes labeled **Student's First Name**, and **MI**, print the student's first name and middle initial. Fill in the appropriate circle in the column below each letter entered.

### **Birth Date**

In the box labeled **Month**, fill in the appropriate circle to designate the student's month of birth.

In the boxes labeled **Day**, print the student's two-digit day of birth. If the student's day of birth is a single-digit number, the first box should be filled in with a zero. Fill in the appropriate circle in the column below each digit entered to designate the student's day of birth.

In the boxes labeled **Year**, print the student's four-digit year of birth. Fill in the appropriate circle in the column below each digit entered to designate the student's year of birth.

### **Test Level**

If not already completed, fill in the appropriate circle to designate the test being administered.

### **Grade**

Fill in the appropriate circle to designate the student's grade.

### **Gender**

Fill in the appropriate circle to designate the student's gender.

### **Ethnicity**

Fill in the appropriate circle to designate the student's ethnicity.

### **Home Language**

Fill in the appropriate circle to designate the student's language background.

### **Enrollment Dates**

Fill in the appropriate circle to designate the date of the student's first enrollment in a school in the United States (not including Puerto Rico).

### **For how many years has this student received LEP/ELL program services?**

Fill in the appropriate circle to designate the number of years the student has received LEP/ELL services.

**Has this student been identified by the home district CSE as having a disability?**

Fill in the appropriate circle to designate the correct answer.

**Test Accommodations**

Fill in the appropriate circle to designate the test accommodations authorized for this student by the CSE or a 504 Accommodation Plan.

**School Information**

Print the school's name and location.

**BEDS Code**

Print the 12-digit BEDS code. Fill in the appropriate circle in the column below each digit entered.

**IMPORTANT NOTE**

Make sure that you have an answer sheet for every student and that all demographic information is filled in. Failure to provide complete and accurate information for each student may cause test results to be delayed.

**Materials Required by the Examiner**

1. A copy of these directions
2. A supply of NYSESLAT Listening, Reading, and Writing test booklets, including one of each for demonstration
3. A supply of NYSESLAT answer sheets
4. A copy of the NYSESLAT Writing Rubrics, located in the back of these directions
5. A supply of sharpened soft-lead (No. 2) pencils with erasers. Extra pencils should be on hand.
6. A clock or a watch

**Materials Required by Each Student**

1. A NYSESLAT test booklet for Listening, Reading, and Writing
2. Two soft-lead (No. 2) pencils with erasers

## **Proposed Schedule for Administration**

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The NYSESLAT Speaking subtest will be administered between April 24, 2006, and May 26, 2006. Teachers must administer the Speaking subtest to students individually in locations separate from other students. Between May 8, 2006, and May 26, 2006, the Listening, Reading, and Writing subtests must be administered to classes or groups of LEP students during three separate sessions on three separate days of the school's choosing.

For all grade spans, the Department suggests that schools administer the subtests in the following sequence: Session 1—Speaking, Session 2—Listening, Session 3—Reading, and Session 4—Writing. Schools may administer the Speaking, Listening, or Reading subtests in a different sequence for some or all students if doing so will facilitate the school's completion of this testing. The Writing subtest should be administered last.

The table below shows the grade spans for the five test levels, the subtests, and the estimated testing time for each subtest. These times are for planning purposes only. The time allotment indicated for each subtest should be adequate for many students. However, if necessary, additional time should be provided for a student to complete the test. **Allow any student to have as much time as he or she needs to complete the test while working productively.**

### NYSESLAT Estimated Testing Times

Grade Span	Subtest	Estimated Testing Time
K-1	Speaking	15
	Listening	30
	Reading	22
	Writing	
	• Writing Conventions	10
	• Writing	30
2-4	Speaking	15
	Listening	35
	Reading	45
	Writing	
	• Writing Conventions	15
	• Pre-Writing	10
	• Writing	15
5-6	Speaking	15
	Listening	35
	Reading	50
	Writing	
	• Writing Conventions	15
	• Pre-Writing	10
	• Writing	15
7-8	Speaking	15
	Listening	40
	Reading	55
	Writing	
	• Writing Conventions	15
	• Pre-Writing	10
	• Writing	20
9-12	Speaking	15
	Listening	40
	Reading	55
	Writing	
	• Writing Conventions	15
	• Pre-Writing	10
	• Writing	20

## After Testing

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1. Make sure the demographic page of each student's answer sheet has been filled out completely.
2. At the conclusion of testing for level K–1, a teacher or aide must transcribe students' responses onto machine-scorable answer sheets exactly as the students recorded them in the test booklets.
3. The NYSESLAT is a secure test. Teachers and administrators must carefully safeguard the test materials. The materials must be kept secure, and no one may make copies of them. Likewise, no one may make notes on or about any of the test questions. Schools must return all secure test materials to Harcourt at the conclusion of testing. These include all used and unused test booklets (regular, large-type, and Braille editions), *Directions for Administration*, scoring manuals, and pre-recorded CDs supplied by Harcourt. Refer to your School Administrator's Manual for information on returning materials.



# NYSESLAT Writing Rubrics

Use these rubrics to holistically score the responses to the Writing prompts.

<b>Sentence Copying</b>	
<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Characteristics of Response</b>
<b>Score 2</b>	The response shows control of the conventions of written English (capitalization, word spacing, and punctuation). The response displays no spelling errors though some letters may be disoriented (backwards, slanted).
<b>Score 1</b>	The response shows some attempt to spell words and use conventions (capitalization, word spacing, and punctuation) but errors may impede communication. Most of the words in the sentence and letters in each word are present and in the correct order.
<b>Score 0</b>	There is no response, the response is minimal, or the response is illegible.

<b>Letter Writing</b>	
<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Characteristics of Response</b>
<b>Score 2</b>	The dictated letter is clearly recognizable as the correct upper or lower case letter.
<b>Score 1</b>	The dictated letter is somewhat recognizable as the correct upper or lower case letter but it may have significant errors in construction, be difficult to decipher, or be backwards.
<b>Score 0</b>	There is no response, the response may be an incorrect letter, or the response may be illegible.

<b>Word Writing</b>	
<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Characteristics of Response</b>
<b>Score 2</b>	The dictated word is spelled correctly.
<b>Score 1</b>	The response shows some phonetic awareness, but the dictated word is spelled incorrectly.
<b>Score 0</b>	There is no response, the response shows no phonetic awareness, or is in a different language.

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## NYSESLAT Writing Rubrics (continued)

<b>Writing Dictated Sentences</b>	
<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Characteristics of Response</b>
<b>Score 2</b>	The response shows control of the conventions of written English (capitalization, word spacing, and punctuation) and may display a small number of spelling errors that do not interfere with communication. All of the words in the dictated sentences are present in the correct order.
<b>Score 1</b>	The response shows some attempt to spell words and to use conventions (capitalization, word spacing, and punctuation) but errors may impede communication. Most or all of the words in the dictated sentences are present in the correct order.
<b>Score 0</b>	There is no response, or the response is not recognizable as the dictated sentence.

<b>Picture Description</b>	
<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Characteristics of Response</b>
<b>Score 2</b>	<p>The student's response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes most of the activity in the picture; shows thinking about the topic.</li> <li>• May display some spelling errors or invented spellings, but these misspellings show phonetic awareness, and the words can be identified by a trained primary-level teacher.</li> <li>• Shows some control of the conventions of written English (capitalization, word spacing, and punctuation), but may not be written in complete sentences.</li> </ul>
<b>Score 1</b>	<p>The student's response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes at least some of the activity in the picture.</li> <li>• Displays many spelling errors or invented spellings that may not be identifiable as words.</li> <li>• Shows some limited phonetic awareness and some attempt to use conventions (capitalization, word spacing, and punctuation).</li> </ul>
<b>Score 0</b>	There is no response, the response is illegible, incomprehensible, or is written in a language other than English.

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