





ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K–12 Learners (ACTFL) is a national standard for language proficiency that provides a common framework for language instruction and assessment. It is designed to help educators and learners understand what they should know and be able to do in a second language. The guidelines are organized into five levels of proficiency: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, and Distinguished. Each level is further divided into sub-levels (A, B, and C) and includes specific performance indicators for listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

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ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K–12 Learners: A National Standard for Language Proficiency. ACTFL, 1998.

Assessing Performance vs. Assessing Proficiency: How are these assessments different?

Assessing Performance	Assessing Proficiency
<p>sBased on Instruction: Describes what the language learner can demonstrate based on what was learned</p> <p>sPracticed: Tasks are derived from the language functions and vocabulary that Practiced: Tasks Sp0f.aneoused from the</p>	

According to Modes of Communication

According to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (2012), the three modes of communication are: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational. The interpersonal mode involves active negotiation of meaning among individuals. The interpretive mode involves one-way communication with no recourse to the active negotiation of meaning with the writer, speaker, or producer. The presentational mode involves one-way communication intended to facilitate interpretation by members of the other culture where no direct opportunity for the active negotiation of meaning between members of the two cultures exists. To ensure the intended audience is successful in its interpretation, the "presenter" needs knowledge of the audience's language and culture. Speaking and listening (conversation); reading and writing (text messages or via social media)

Interpretive mode involves one-way communication with no recourse to the active negotiation of meaning with the writer, speaker, or producer. Reading (websites, stories, articles), listening (speeches, messages, songs), or viewing (video clips) of authentic materials. Presentational mode involves one-way communication intended to facilitate interpretation by members of the other culture where no direct opportunity for the active negotiation of meaning between members of the two cultures exists. Writing (messages, articles, reports), speaking (telling a story, giving a speech, describing a poster), or visually representing (video or PowerPoint)

Three Modes of Communication

Interpersonal	Interpretive	Presentational
Active negotiation of meaning among individuals	Interpretation of what the author, speaker, or producer wants the receiver of the message to understand	Creation of messages to inform, explain, persuade, or narrate
Participants observe and monitor one another to see how their meanings and intentions are being communicated	One-way communication with no recourse to the active negotiation of meaning with the writer, speaker, or producer	One-way communication intended to facilitate interpretation by members of the other culture where no direct opportunity for the active negotiation of meaning between members of the two cultures exists
Adjustments and clarifications are made accordingly	Interpretation differs from comprehension and translation in that interpretation implies the ability to read (or listen or view) "between the lines," including understanding from within the cultural mindset or perspective	To ensure the intended audience is successful in its interpretation, the "presenter" needs knowledge of the audience's language and culture
Speaking and listening (conversation); reading and writing (text messages or via social media)	Reading (websites, stories, articles), listening (speeches, messages, songs), or viewing (video clips) of authentic materials	Writing (messages, articles, reports), speaking (telling a story, giving a speech, describing a poster), or visually representing (video or PowerPoint)

According to Language Domains

According to the ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners, language domains are defined as follows:

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What are the parameters for the language learner’s performance?

Domain	Examples	What it describes
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> s / ASK FORMULATED QUESTIONS s / INITIATE, MAINTAIN, AND END A CONVERSATION s / CREATE WITH LANGUAGE s / ARRANGE AND DESCRIBE s / MAKE INFERENCES 	Functions are the global tasks the learner can perform in the language
Contexts and Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> s / SELF s / NEAR IMMEDIATE environment s / GENERAL INTEREST s / WORK RELATED 	Contexts are situations within which the learner can function; Content is the topics which the learner can understand and discuss
Text Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> s / WORDS s / PHRASES s / SENTENCES s / QUESTIONS s / STRINGS OF SENTENCES s / CONNECTED SENTENCES s / PARAGRAPHS 	Text type controlled by the learner is that which the learner is able to understand and produce in order to perform the functions of the level

1. *El mundo de los deportes* es un mundo muy interesante. Los deportes son una parte importante de la vida de muchas personas. En mi país, los deportes más populares son el fútbol, el básquetbol y el tenis. Los niños disfrutan mucho de jugar deportes en el recreo. Los adultos también disfrutan de hacer ejercicio y jugar deportes. Los deportes ayudan a mantenerse saludable y feliz.

4 How To Use the Performance Descriptors To Inform Classroom Instruction and Assessment

1. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short audio recording in a foreign language.

2. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short video recording in a foreign language.

3. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short written text in a foreign language.

4. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short audio recording in a foreign language.

5. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short video recording in a foreign language.

6. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short written text in a foreign language.

7. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short audio recording in a foreign language.

8. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short video recording in a foreign language.

9. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short written text in a foreign language.

10. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short audio recording in a foreign language.

11. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short video recording in a foreign language.

12. The student can understand and respond to the main message of a short written text in a foreign language.

Domains	Novice Range	Intermediate Range	Advanced Range
	<p>Understands words, phrases, and formulaic language that have been practiced and memorized to get meaning of the main idea from simple, highly-predictable oral or written texts, with strong visual support.</p>	<p>Understands main ideas and some supporting details on familiar topics from a variety of texts.</p>	<p>Understands main ideas and supporting details on familiar and some new, concrete topics from a variety of more complex texts that have a clear, organized structure.</p>

ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners | **Presentational**

	Novice Range	Intermediate Range	Advanced Range
Domains	Communicates information on very familiar topics using a variety of words, phrases, and sentences that have been practiced and memorized.	Communicates information and expresses own thoughts about familiar topics using sentences and series of sentences.	Communicates information and expresses self with detail and organization on familiar and some new concrete topics using paragraphs.
Functions	Presents simple, basic information on very familiar topics by producing words, list, notes, and formulaic language using highly practiced language. May show emerging evidence of the ability to express own thoughts and preferences.	Expresses own thoughts and presents information and personal preferences on familiar topics by creating with language primarily in present time. May show emerging evidence of the ability to tell or retell a story and provide additional description.	Produces narrations and descriptions in all major time frames on familiar and some unfamiliar topics. May show emerging evidence of the ability to provide a well-supported argument, including detailed evidence in support of a point of view.
Contexts/ Content	Creates messages in some personally relevant contexts on topics that relate to basic biographical information. May show emerging evidence of the ability to create messages in highly practiced contexts related to oneself and immediate environment.	Creates messages in contexts relevant to oneself and others, and one's immediate environment. May show emerging evidence of the ability to create messages on general interest and work-related topics.	Creates messages fully and effectively in contexts both personal and general. Content areas include topics of personal and general interest (community, national, and international events) as well as work-related topics and areas of special competence. May show emerging evidence of the ability to create messages in more abstract content areas.
Text Type	Produces words and phrases and highly practiced sentences or formulaic questions.	Produces sentences, series of sentences, and some connected sentences.	Produces full paragraphs that are organized and detailed.

ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners | **Presentational**

	Novice Range	Intermediate Range	Advanced Range
Language Control	<p>Produces memorized language that is appropriate to the context; limited language control may require a sympathetic audience to be understood.</p> <p>With practice, polish, or editing, may show emerging evidence of Intermediate-level language control.</p>	<p>Control of language is sufficient to be understood by audiences accustomed to language produced by language learners.</p> <p>With practice, polish, or editing, may show emerging evidence of Advanced-level language control.</p>	<p>Control of high-frequency structures is sufficient to be understood by audiences not accustomed to language of language learners.</p> <p>With practice, polish, or editing, shows evidence of Advanced-level control of grammar and syntax.</p>
Vocabulary	<p>Produces a number of high frequency words and formulaic expressions; able to use a limited variety of vocabulary on familiar topics.</p>	<p>Produces vocabulary on variety of everyday topics, topics of personal interest, and topics that have been studied.</p>	<p>Produces a broad range of vocabulary related to topics of personal, public, and community interest, and some specific vocabulary related to areas of study or expertise.</p>
Communication Strategies	<p>May use some or all of the following strategies to communicate, able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> s Rely on a practiced format s Use facial expressions and gestures s Repeat words s Resort to first language s Use graphic organizers to present information s Rely on multiple drafts and practice sessions with feedback s Support presentational speaking with visuals and notes s Support presentational writing with visuals or prompts 	<p>May use some or all of the following strategies to communicate and maintain audience interest, able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> s Show an increasing awareness of errors and able to self-correct or edit s Use phrases, imagery, or content s Simplify s Use known language to compensate for missing vocabulary s Use graphic organizer s Use reference resources as appropriate 	<p>May use some or all of the following strategies to communicate and maintain audience interest, able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> s Demonstrate conscious efforts at self-editing and correction s Elaborate and clarify s Provide examples, synonyms, or antonyms s Use cohesion, chronology and details to explain or narrate fully s Circumlocute
Cultural Awareness	<p>May use some memorized culturally appropriate gestures, formulaic expressions, and basic writing conventions.</p>	<p>Uses some culturally appropriate vocabulary, expressions, and gestures. Reflects some knowledge of cultural differences related to written and spoken communication.</p>	<p>Uses cultural knowledge appropriate to the presentational context and increasingly reflective or authentic cultural practices and perspectives.</p>

