ESL Progress Report – Comments about Language Learning[[1]](#footnote-1)

The following comments are intended to help teachers prepare progress reports at the end of a term or course. The comments reflect not only the CLB outcome statements, but also reflect the performance conditions and global outcome statements (the left side of each benchmark page) to give students a picture of the conditions under which they can perform tasks and the quality or characteristics of the language use.

Teachers should begin the language learning comments with a sentence about the themes/topics in which students practised English. They should then give comments for each skill, including strengths and/or difficulties. Several phrases to introduce the comments are provided below, which teachers should use depending on whether the student is at a beginning, developing or completing point in his/her progress in the CLB level.

The comments for each skill can be modified to reflect the particular tasks/competencies that have been addressed in class and are reflected in the portfolio. **Performance conditions or characteristics of the quality of language use should NOT be changed.**

Teachers may find it useful to **first** create a bank of modified comments for their class and then use this **modified bank** which reflects the particular tasks/competencies that have been addressed in class and are reflected in the portfolio to create the specific comments for their students. Please save any modified comments banks as new Word documents and retain a copy of this original comments bank for reference.

Comments can be copied and pasted from Word into the Adobe Reader PDFs. However, please be aware that font size, font face, bold/underline/italics, and spacing will also be copied. If you modify the comments bank in Word, please keep these properties the same. For your reference, the current Word settings are:

* font face = Calibri
* font size = 10
* spacing = single (no space before or after paragraphs)

You may notice an extra space after a paragraph in a progress report pdf; you can avoid creating this extra space by pressing shift+enter (hold shift, then press enter) instead of just pressing enter to start a new paragraph.

# Comments Bank

**Context statement**:

You practised English for (shopping for groceries, going to the doctor...)

**Progress point intro phrase**:

Beginning – You are beginning to...

Developing – You can sometimes...

Completing – You can usually...

**Comment statements:**

N.B. Teachers can add, change or remove competencies to reflect what they have taught and what is in the portfolio.

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| **Listening** | |
| **CLB 1** | ...understand a few words for greetings, questions and information. You can see the speaker. The speaker talks slowly. The speaker points or uses pictures. You need a lot of help or translation.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to... |
| **CLB 2** | ...understand some words, phrases, and short sentences for politeness, instructions, warnings and basic information. You can see the speaker. The speaker talks slowly. The speaker often repeats. You need a lot of help.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 3** | ...understand key words, phrases, and most short sentences in short conversations for saying hello/good-bye, 2-4 step instructions, permission and stories. You can see the speaker. The speaker talks slowly and often repeats. You frequently need help.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 4** | ...understand with some effort simple formal and informal conversations or short talks that are important to you, such as small talk, introductions, 4-5 step instructions, commercials, or reports from other students. You can understand some short videos or CDs if you are prepared for them. The speaker talks a little slower than normal. You probably need some repetition. You need a little help.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 5** | ...understand very broadly and with some effort the situation and relationship between speakers, the gist of moderately short conversations and talks that are on everyday, personally relevant topics, such as compliments or invitations, instructions, advice or suggestions, description or stories. You can broadly understand short videos, CDs and some radio talks when you are prepared for them. The speaker talks a little slower than normal. You may need some repetition.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 6** | ...understand main idea and speaker’s mood/attitude, key words and most details of conversations and talks in moderately demanding contexts, such as apologies, excuses, instructions that are not in order, advice, presentations or meetings. You can follow audio tapes or radio talks and participate in phone calls which are simple, short, predictable. Conversations are face-to-face, formal/ informal, and at a slower to normal rate. You may need some repetition.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 7** | ...understand main points, most details, some inferred meanings in recorded/video talks and conversations on familiar topics in moderately demanding contexts, such as expressions of gratitude, complaint, hope, simple technical/non-technical instructions, voice-mail messages, orders, reports, and informal presentations. Conversations are face-to-face, formal/informal, usually at a normal rate. You may sometimes need repetition/rewording and have trouble with faster speech of native speakers.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 8** | ...understand main points, details, purpose, attitudes, formality and styles in formal/informal conversations about abstract and complex ideas, and some technical talks related to field, such as formal welcomes, toasts, congratulations of achievements, multistep instructions, warnings, recommendations and presentations. Conversations are face-to-face, live, audio or video recorded at a normal rate. You often have difficulty with rapid, colloquial/idiomatic speech between native speakers.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 9** | ...understand and/or evaluate complex formal interaction, roles, relationships/status of speakers, and get key information for important tasks on a broad variety of, general interest, technical, abstract and/or unfamiliar topics in own field, such as formal social conversations, multi-step instructions for a familiar process/procedure, recommendations, proposals, lectures, or extended exchanges. Conversations are live or audio/video mediated at a normal rate in workplaces, business or school settings. You often have difficulty understanding verbal humour, low-frequency idioms and cultural references.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |

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| **Speaking** | |
| **CLB 1** | ...use a few words to greet people, ask some questions and give some information. You speak very slowly. Conversations are very short with one person. The other person usually asks you questions. The other person helps you understand. You have very little control of grammar. Pronunciation may cause big problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 2** | ...use some words and phrases to say hello/good-bye and be polite, say you have a problem, give a few instructions or commands, give/ask for something, give basic, everyday information and talk about things you like. You speak slowly. Conversations are very short with one person. The other person asks you questions. The other person helps you understand with gestures and pictures. You have little control of grammar. Pronunciation may cause big problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 3** | ...use basic words, phrases and grammar with some control, to introduce yourself and ask about the other person, give short directions, ask for/give permission, ask for or accept help, tell a story and talk about people, things, needs and health. Your speech is slow to normal speed. Conversations are short with one person about everyday topics. You sometimes need gestures and pictures to help you. You have some control of grammar. Pronunciation may often cause problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 4** | ...use adequate basic words, phrases and a variety of short sentences to take part in short routine conversations, give short instructions, tell a story or describe a situation or process. Your speech is slow to normal speed. Conversations are short with one person or in small familiar groups. You can occasionally make very short, simple phone calls. You have control of basic grammar. Pronunciation may cause problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 5** | ...use a variety of simple and some complex grammar, a range of common vocabulary and some idioms to take part in small talk, give 5-6 step instructions, get things done, make a detailed report or presentation in routine, face-to-face conversations and participate in some group discussions in moderately complex ‘real-world’ situations. Conversations are short with one person or in small familiar groups or may be on the phone. Your speech is reasonably fluent with frequent hesitations or pauses. Grammar and pronunciation errors are frequent and sometimes cause problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 6** | ...use a variety of structures, a range of everyday vocabulary, phrases and idioms to take part in routine/non-routine conversations and show understanding, take turns, encourage others or avoid a question, take short phone messages, give sets of non-sequential instructions, make formal suggestions with reasons, tell a detailed past story, participate in an interview or small group discussion. Conversations are with one familiar/unfamiliar person, in small informal groups or on the phone. Your speech is reasonably fluent with frequent normal hesitations. Grammar and pronunciation errors are frequent and may sometimes cause problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 7** | ...use a variety of sentence structures, an expanded inventory of idioms to take part comfortably in formal/informal conversations involving problem-solving/decision-making, make/cancel appointments, take short phone messages, give sets of routine non-sequential instructions, ask for/express and respond to apologies, warnings, advice, possibility; give a summary, ask for/provide detailed information, participate in a small group meeting. Conversations are with one familiar/unfamiliar person, in small informal groups or on the phone. Your speech is slow to normal and reasonably fluent with frequent self-corrections/re-phrasing. Grammar and pronunciation errors are frequent but rarely cause problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 8** | ...use a variety of sentence structures including reported speech, an expanded inventory of idiomatic language to communicate effectively in daily practical social/ familiar work situations to speak on familiar concrete/abstract topics, provide descriptions, express/analyze opinions, proposals and explanations, synthesize abstract ideas and hypothesize, pass on technical/non technical instructions, participate in a debate. Conversation is with one or more people, face to face or on the phone or in familiar, predictable settings, often at a normal rate. Considerable stress affects performance. Grammar and pronunciation errors rarely cause problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 9** | ...use a variety of verbal and non-verbal strategies to actively, appropriately and effectively interact to obtain, provide and exchange key information, participate in 30-minute formal conversations about complex abstract/conceptual topics, coordinate tasks with others, advise, persuade, reassure others or deal with complaints; argue a point or give a briefing, or discuss a case study. Conversations are with one or more people, face to face or on the phone often with authority figures in academic/work contexts. Your speech is normal or fast. Prepared talks may be rigid in organization, delivery and style. Considerable stress affects performance. Grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation errors very rarely cause problems.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |

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| **Reading** | |
| **CLB 1** | ...understand very few ‘sight’ words to read simple greetings, 1-step instructions, forms, maps, signs and stories with 1- 5 sentences. Sentences are very short, and texts have pictures. You use a bilingual dictionary.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 2** | ...understand some words, names and phrases, to read simple invitations, 1-4 step instructions, simple forms, maps, diagrams, signs, business notices and stories with 1- 7 sentences. Sentences are short, and texts have pictures. You use a bilingual dictionary.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 3** | ...understand some basic words, phrases and spelling patterns, and sound out some words to read short notes and letters, 1-5 step instructions, find information in tables and get the gist of simple news articles or information. The things you read are simple, 1-2 paragraphs, familiar and sometimes have pictures. You use a bilingual dictionary.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 4** | ...understand a range of familiar, factual language and guess some words to read simple texts of 2-3 paragraphs, such as letters, instructions, stories/information about daily life, simple biographies, simple newspaper stories, ads and flyers. You use a bilingual dictionary.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 5** | ...understand a range of concrete, familiar vocabulary and some technical words, the purpose, main ideas, and some details and make some low level inferences in authentic moderately complex 2-3 paragraphs about familiar topics, such as notes, newspaper articles, 7-10 step instructions, educational material, stories, reference items and short reports. You are beginning to use an English only dictionary that is for EAL students.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 6** | ...understand a range of mostly concrete literal and some sometimes abstract/technical words, the main idea, key words and important details, compare and contrast and make low-level inferences in plain language authentic, moderately complex prose/non-prose of 3-5 paragraphs, such as e-mail messages, letters, instructions when order must be inferred, notices, announcements, news reports, schedules/charts, reference material. You can guess the meanings of some new words using prefixes/suffixes. You use an English-only dictionary.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 7** | ...understand a range of concrete, abstract, conceptual and technical words, the main idea, key words and important details, locate, integrate, compare, contrast and make low level inferences in authentic, moderately complex prose/non-prose 5 – 10 paragraphs, such as e-mail messages/letters of appreciation, complaint, 10-13 step technical/non-technical procedures when order must be inferred, advisories, violation/penalty notices, course calendars, complex tables, graphs, or reports. You use an English-only dictionary to confirm meaning. You are beginning to read to learn or for pleasure.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 8** | ...understand a range of concrete, abstract, conceptual and technical language, the main idea, key words, attitudes and important details, locate, integrate, compare, contrast and infer bias and purpose in authentic, moderately complex prose/non-prose of 8-15 paragraphs, such as e-mail messages of assessment, opinions, response to complaint, multi-step technical/non-technical procedures when order must be inferred, regulations, laws, extended reports or stories. You use an English-only dictionary for precision and vocabulary building. You read to learn, for information or for pleasure.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 9** | ...understand ideas, opinions, general information, bias and purpose in a range of linguistically and conceptually complex authentic, 3 – 5-page multipurpose texts, such as editorials, fiction, advisory/procedural instructions, employment benefits documents, contracts or financial tables; manuals, research papers, argumentative essays and electronic reference sources. You read to learn content areas, to learn language or for pleasure.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |

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| **Writing** | |
| **CLB 1** | ...use a few words, correct spelling and punctuation to copy numbers, letters, or words and write 3 – 5 sentences (guided writing) to give information about yourself and your family (personal information such as name, address, and phone number) and fill out a simple form. You have difficulty writing words that you don’t know.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 2** | ...use some familiar words, very short sentences, correct spelling and punctuation to write 5 – 6 sentences (guided writing) to describe a situation or give information, copy words, fill out a simple form, or answer questions. You still have difficulty with the spelling rules of English.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to . . . |
| **CLB 3** | ...use a variety of short, simple sentences and correct spelling and punctuation to write 5-8 sentences about yourself and your family, write a friendly note, copy short items from dictionaries or schedules, fill out a form, and write short work messages. You still have difficulty linking short sentences together.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 4** | ...use a variety of simple sentences and correct spelling, punctuation, and conjunctions to write in one paragraph notes and short letters, copy a short text, fill out a form, describe an event, experience, or future plans for familiar readers. You still have difficulty with more complex writing tasks.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 5** | ...use a variety of words, phrases, simple sentences and some complex sentences, correct spelling and punctuation to write/respond in 1 paragraph to invitations, notes, letters, fill in forms, take dictation and write down short messages, describe an event, experience, or procedure, or explain reasons for familiar readers. You have frequent difficulty with complex structures and may make awkward-sounding phrases.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 6** | ...use adequate vocabulary, good simple structures and some complex ones, good spelling and punctuation to write/respond in 1-2 paragraphs formal short letters of congratulations, thanks or apology, take notes from a presentation, fill in forms, describe a process, write a story, comparison or report. You have difficulty with some complex structures and may make awkward-sounding phrases.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 7** | ...use a range of vocabulary, complex structures, spelling and punctuation to write in 2 – 3 paragraphs moderately complex formal short letters or e-mails of appreciation, disappointment or hope; take notes from recorded information or presentations; write appropriate short letters/memos; fill in forms; tell a story from the past, describe/compare processes or systems. You have mostly satisfactory control over grammar, spelling and punctuation. Your choice of words and the organization of your text may be typical of your first language.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 8** | ...use a variety of simple and complex sentences, vocabulary, spelling, mechanics and paragraph/text development to write in 3 – 4 paragraphs moderately complex short formal letters expressing/responding to sympathy, or clarifying conflict; write instructions for a process given in a live/recorded talk; complete a teacher-made summary form, memo, work record; fill in forms; write about a historical event/story; express/analyze opinions on familiarabstract topics. You have good control over common sentence patterns, with some difficulty with complex structures, naturalness of phrases, expressions, organization and style.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |
| **CLB 9** | ...use a range of complex and diverse grammar and vocabulary, spelling mechanics and adequate text organization with limited flexibility in tone and style to write in 4 – 6 paragraphs complex, routine formal/informal notes and letters in business/academic environments; fill in forms; write summaries of reports or information in graphs, charts or questionnaires, minutes of meetings, letters of request for information/response, memos, reports, essays to narrate a sequence of events, describe and compare complex ideas/processes or provide a personal response to a text. You have good control of complex structures and adequate organization, but flexibility in tone and style is limited. Some grammar/word combination errors still occur. You can effectively proofread and revise your work with occasional help from others.  You usually...  It is difficult for you to ... |

**Sample Suggestions:**

* Volunteer at a community centre or at your children’s school so you can use English.
* Watch T.V. using “closed captions.”
* Listen to English radio; try Learning English with the CBC.
* Go to the library and borrow books.
* Google search “Learning English” and find a site that you like.
* Use the following phrases whenever you talk with an English speaker: “Please repeat that.” “What does that mean?”

“How do you spell that?”

* Practise saying the letters of the alphabet in English. Practise writing the letters. Then do the same with numbers.
* Make a list of new words and phrases that you have learned. Review your list every day. Add new words and phrases

every week. Put the list in a place that you will see every day, such as on the fridge or by your dresser. Try to use the

word in conversation or in writing.

* Set aside 10 minutes a day to speak in English with friends and family.
* If you want to practise your public speaking, join a Toast Masters Club. For more information about the location of a club, you can go to [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org).
* Volunteer with a school, club or organization. This is a great way to meet new people, practise English, and gain valuable work skills.
* Take a course from a local community club or high school for fun. You can take a class in cooking, sports, art, crafts, first aid, dance and so on.
* Set goals for learning English--learning English requires commitment. Make an agenda or create a plan for your learning. Use a journal or a calendar to help you plan your study time.
* Keep a journal, diary or personal dictionary. Write down words you hear and do not know, look them up in a dictionary and record the meaning. Try to learn a new word each day and write it in your journal.
* Listen to music with English lyrics. Try reading song lyrics as you listen (you can find them on the internet by doing a quick search). Singing is an excellent way to practise intonation and stress.
* Use English recipes.
* Practise skimming newspaper (read headings, subheadings, bold and italic print, looking at pictures and diagrams). After skimming, begin to read in detail.
* For new words, look for a prefix, look for a suffix, look for the stem.
* Use a dictionary.
* Ask someone to help you with your English. Review lessons from school, newspaper articles, news reports, etc.

Example:for a student whose outcome levels are: (L) 3B; (S) 3D; (R) 3D and (W) 3B, a teacher *might* write...

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| **Comments about your language learning:** |
| You practised English for shopping for groceries, going to the doctor, visiting a library, voting in an election, and looking for a job.  Listening (3B):  You are beginning to understand key words, phrases, and most short sentences in short conversations for saying hello/good-bye, 2-4 step instructions, permission and stories. You can see the speaker. The speaker talks slowly and often repeats.  You use good strategies when you don’t understand. You say, *please repeat that,* or *Sorry, I don’t understand*.  Speaking (3D):  You can sometimes use basic words, phrases and grammar with some control, to introduce yourself and ask about the other person, give short directions, ask for/give permission, ask for/accept help, tell a story and talk about people, things, needs and health. Your speech is slow to normal speed. Conversations are short with one person about everyday topics. You sometimes need gestures and pictures to help you.  You usually practise and use many of our new words outside of class.  It is difficult for you to remember the ‘s’ on he/she/it verbs.  Reading (3D):  You can sometimes understand some basic words, phrases and spelling patterns, and sound out some words to read short notes and letters, 1-5 step instructions, find information in tables and get the gist of simple news articles or information. The things you read are simple, 1-2 paragraphs, familiar and sometimes have pictures. You use a bilingual dictionary.  You usually try to review your worksheets at home. This helps you to learn and remember your new skills.  It’s difficult for you to sound out new words in things you read.  Writing (3B):  You are beginning to use a variety of short, simple sentences and correct spelling and punctuation to write 5-8 sentences about yourself and your family, write a friendly note, copy short items from dictionaries or schedules, fill out 15-20 items on a form, and write short work messages.  You usually remember capital letters and periods. You always check your work.  It’s difficult for you to spell correctly. |

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| **Suggestions:** |
| You should join the library. You can borrow books and CDs for free. You will be able to borrow many simple English books to read. You can borrow books to help you learn the sounds of letters, spelling patterns and how to spell new words. You should write new words 10 times each to help you remember them. |

1. Developed in collaboration with the Province of Manitoba. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)