

General Breakdown of Native Language of Students

Preliterate	Native language has no written form. (e.g. many American, African, Australian, and Pacific indigenous languages)
Non Alphabet	Student's native language is written in a non alphabetic script (e.g. Chinese-one character per word or phrase)
Non Roman Alphabet	Student's native language is written in non-Roman alphabet (e.g. Russian, Thai, Nepalese)
Roman Alphabet	Student's native language is written in a Roman alphabetic script (Spanish, French) Students read from left to right and recognize the letter shapes and fonts.

Things to consider
once literacy levels of ESL Students are determined.

Preliterate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students need exposure to the purposes and uses of literacy• Students will need basic instruction (e.g. left to right, top to bottom, letters to words, words to sentences)• Students may have difficulty using writing to reinforce what they learn orally
Non-literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students have had some exposure to the written language and thus may have a greater awareness of the value• Students are often embarrassed and are reluctant to disclose their limited literacy skills• Students may have difficulty using writing to reinforce what they learn orally
Semi-literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students may have previous literacy failures, and may approach English literacy with trepidation
Literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students understand their learning process, have already established study skills and habits

Literacy Levels of
English as Second Language Students
in their Native Language

Preliterate	Native language has no written form
Non literate	Students have very little or no access to literacy instruction
Semi literate	Students had limited access to literacy instruction
Literate	Students are comfortable in reading and writing in their native language, often have advance degrees or training in native country

TRADITIONAL CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) LEARNER

DESCRIPTORS	LITERACY LEVELS
Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases	BEGINNING ESL LITERACY
Individual can understand frequently used words in context and very simple phrases, spoken slowly and with some repetition; there is little communicative output and only in the most routine situations	BEGINNING ESL
Individual can understand simple learned phrases and limited new phrases containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with frequent repetition; can ask and respond to questions using phrases	LOW INTERMEDIATE ESL
Individual can understand learned phrases and short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary; can communicate basic survival needs with some help; can participate in conversation in limited social situations and use new phrases with hesitation	HIGH INTERMEDIATE ESL
Individual can converse on many everyday subjects and some unfamiliar vocabulary, but may need repetition, rewording, or slower speech; can speak creatively, but with hesitation	LOW ADVANCED ESL
Individual can understand and participate effectively in face-to-face conversations on everyday subjects spoken at normal speed; can converse and understand independently in survival, work, and social situations.	HIGH ADVANCED ESL