



---

# Can Do Descriptors

## KEY USES EDITION

Grades 2-3

## The WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grades K–12

The WIDA Can Do Descriptors provide examples of what language learners **can do** at various stages of English language development in listening, speaking, reading and writing. The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* is one component of the WIDA Standards Framework (shown at right). The framework, as a whole, supports the implementation of the WIDA English Language Development Standards in the instruction and assessment of language learners. We encourage educators to use the *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* in conjunction with the other components of the framework, along with the previous edition of the Can Do Descriptors. For more information on the WIDA Standards Framework, visit [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us).

The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* provides examples of academic language use for four specific communicative purposes. These purposes, referred to as **Key Uses**, were identified based on reviews of literature and a language analysis of college and career readiness standards:

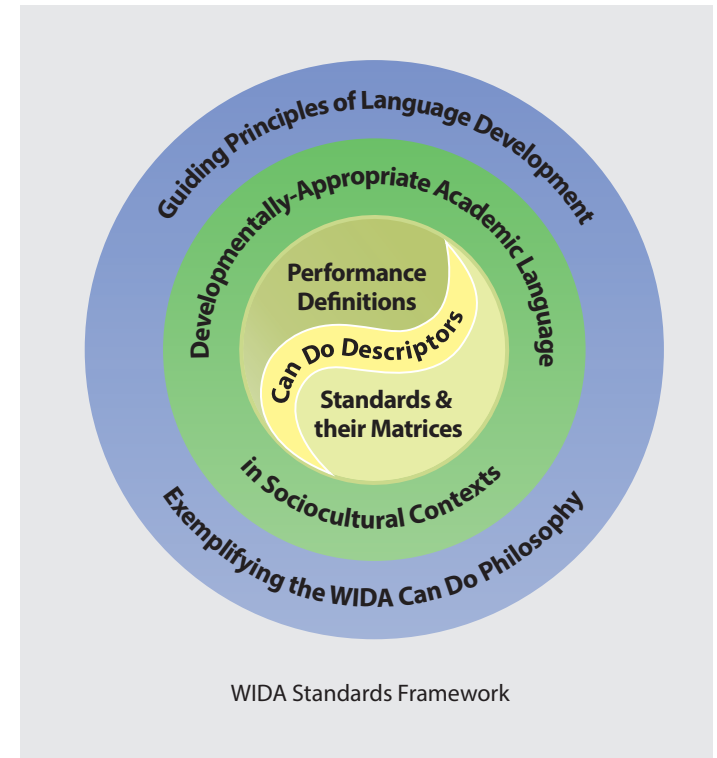
**Recount:** To display knowledge or narrate experiences or events. Example tasks for the Key Use of **Recount** include telling or summarizing stories, producing information reports, and sharing past experiences.

**Explain:** To clarify the “why” or the “how” of ideas, actions, or phenomena. Example tasks for the Key Use of **Explain** include describing life cycles, sharing why or how things work, stating causes and effects, and sharing results of experiments.

**Argue:** To persuade by making claims supported by evidence. Example tasks for the Key Use of **Argue** include stating preferences or opinions and constructing arguments with evidence.

**Discuss:** To interact with others to build meaning and share knowledge. Example tasks for the Key Use of **Discuss** include participating in small or large group activities and projects.

The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* and the example descriptors are not exhaustive but are meant to help guide the planning and conversation around meaningful participation of language learners in standards-based content curriculum, instruction, and assessment.



## Organization of the WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grades K–12

The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition* is organized by grade-level bands (K, 1, 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12) that correspond to those in ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. Within each grade-level band, the descriptors are organized by Key Use (Recount, Explain, Argue and Discuss) and within each Key Use, there are example descriptors for WIDA’s six levels of language proficiency (ELP Levels 1–6).

The descriptors in Level 6 represent the language performance of students who have met all the criteria for Level 5. Unlike the descriptors at Levels 1–5 that provide examples of performance at the end of the level, the descriptors at Level 6 are examples of performance within Level 6.

For three of the Key Uses (**Recount**, **Explain**, and **Argue**) you’ll see descriptors for the four language domains (Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing). The descriptors for the Key Use **Discuss** are only shown for oral language. The Key Use **Discuss** highlights the importance of oral language development for meaningful participation of all language learners, regardless of their level of language proficiency.

### Potential Uses for the WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition

Audiences	The WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition can help....
<b>Educators</b> who work with language learners, including coaches, teachers ( <i>e.g., general education, gifted and talented, special education, Title I</i> ), language specialists, and support staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Differentiate curriculum, instruction, and assessments designed in English based on language learners’ levels of English language proficiency</li><li>• Collaborate and engage in instructional conversations about the academic success of language learners in English environments</li><li>• Advocate for equitable access to content for language learners based on their level of language proficiency</li></ul>
<b>Administrators</b> and school leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate with other educators about students’ English language development</li><li>• Support the WIDA Can Do Philosophy throughout schools and districts</li><li>• Advocate for equitable access to content for language learners based on their level of language proficiency</li></ul>

Stakeholders are encouraged to use the Can Do Descriptors beyond the audiences and purposes identified above to advocate on behalf of language learners.

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency\* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showing what happens next based on familiar oral stories (<i>e.g., by pointing or drawing</i>)</li> <li>Drawing or providing other visual displays of people, animals, or objects in response to oral prompts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the “who,” “where” and “when” of illustrated statements</li> <li>Identifying main materials or resources from oral descriptions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying linking words or phrases related to passage of time in speech (<i>e.g., “on Monday” “the next day”</i>)</li> <li>Illustrating events in response to audio recordings of stories or poems</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-enacting content-related situations or events from oral descriptions</li> <li>Identifying content-related ideas from oral discourse using multi-media (<i>e.g., retracing steps of a process</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying details of content-related topics from oral discourse</li> <li>Making designs or models following oral directions and specifications (<i>e.g., maps, origami</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying key ideas or details from texts read aloud or information presented orally</li> <li>Determining the main ideas and supporting details of texts read aloud or information in diverse media and formats</li> </ul>
SPEAKING	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responding to questions related to stories or experiences (<i>e.g., “Who came to the door?”</i>)</li> <li>Acting out and naming events or experiences throughout the school day</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reproducing facts or statements in context</li> <li>Participating in multi-media presentations based on research</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retelling simple stories from picture cues</li> <li>Stating information from personal or school-related experiences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sequencing events in stories with temporal transitions (<i>e.g., “After the sun set...”</i>)</li> <li>Describing situations and events from school and the community</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing main ideas of content-related information</li> <li>Asking and answering questions about information from speakers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing descriptive details of content-related information or activities</li> <li>Naming the steps for producing multi-media presentations with some detail</li> </ul>

\*Except for Level 6, for which there is no ceiling.

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency\* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
READING	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying key words and phrases in illustrated text</li> <li>Signaling language associated with content-related information (<i>e.g., during preview, view, &amp; review</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying time-related language in context (<i>e.g., in biographies</i>)</li> <li>Illustrating experiences of characters in illustrated statements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating timelines or graphic organizers from illustrated related statements or paragraphs</li> <li>Identifying temporal-related words that signal order of events (<i>e.g., "In the beginning..."</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ordering a series of events based on familiar texts</li> <li>Identifying main ideas and details in illustrated texts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paraphrasing narratives or informational text with support (<i>e.g., arranging paragraph strips</i>)</li> <li>Highlighting relevant information in grade-level texts to produce summaries</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process recounts by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying setting and character details from grade-level text</li> <li>Determining the central messages, lessons, or morals of fables and folktales from diverse cultures</li> </ul>
WRITING	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labeling images that illustrate the steps for different processes (<i>e.g., writing workshop</i>)</li> <li>Creating visual representations of ideas or stories</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listing ideas using graphic organizers</li> <li>Describing visual information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retelling past experiences</li> <li>Expressing ideas in various genres (<i>e.g., poetry, interactive journals</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing a series of events or procedures</li> <li>Creating stories with details about characters and events</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing the sequence of content-related ideas</li> <li>Providing details and examples about narratives</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recount by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signaling order of events using temporal words and phrases</li> <li>Relating real or imagined experiences or events</li> </ul>

\*Except for Level 6, for which there is no ceiling.

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency\* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pointing to visual characteristics of models or real-life objects from oral clues</li> <li>Pairing objects, pictures, or equations as directed by a partner</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matching oral descriptions to photos, pictures, or icons</li> <li>Following simple sequences presented orally to create patterns or sequences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carrying out steps described orally to solve problems</li> <li>Completing graphic organizers or representations from oral comparisons</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying connectors in speech or text read aloud</li> <li>Identifying content-related ideas and details in oral discourse</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the purpose of language/the message in each content area</li> <li>Following a series of short oral directions to create models of content-area phenomena or processes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguishing shades of meaning among closely related words in oral discourse (<i>e.g., jump/leap, huge/enormous</i>)</li> <li>Comparing strategies from extended oral discourse</li> </ul>
SPEAKING	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing the outcomes of experiments or stories with guidance and visual support</li> <li>Naming or answering Wh-questions related to classroom routines (<i>e.g., "What do we do now?"</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naming steps in processes or procedures</li> <li>Describing familiar phenomena in words or phrases</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe relationships between objects or uses for tools</li> <li>Expressing cause and effect of behaviors or events</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stating details of processes or procedures</li> <li>Describing consequences of behaviors or occurrences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting ideas in content-related presentations</li> <li>Elaborating on the cause of various phenomena (<i>e.g., shooting stars, sunsets</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elaborating on ideas in light of conversations among students</li> <li>Synthesizing main ideas from supporting details of text read aloud or information obtained from diverse media</li> </ul>

\*Except for Level 6, for which there is no ceiling.

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency\* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
READING	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying words and phrases in titles and highlighted texts</li> <li>Matching pictures with graphic information from illustrated texts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpreting images, illustrations, and graphics</li> <li>Identifying elements of expository texts (<i>e.g., graphs, captions</i>) in illustrated texts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sequencing sentences descriptive of processes or procedures in informational texts</li> <li>Locating details in content area texts or media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illustrating cause/effect relationships in content area texts</li> <li>Classifying main ideas and details in informational or explanatory texts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying relevant information from texts on the same content area topic (<i>e.g., in open sorts</i>)</li> <li>Identifying the main purpose of texts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process explanations by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas, or steps in technical procedures in texts</li> <li>Connecting ideas with details in extended content area texts</li> </ul>
WRITING	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listing and illustrating ideas</li> <li>Stating facts associated with images or illustrations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing elements of processes or procedures</li> <li>Stating how something happens using illustrations and sequential language (<i>e.g., eruption of volcanoes</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparing causes of different phenomena</li> <li>Stating ideas about content-related topics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relating details and illustrating stages of different cycles (<i>e.g. frogs, plants</i>)</li> <li>Describing strategies to solve problems</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing details of processes, procedures, and events</li> <li>Producing “how to” manuals based on personal experiences or scientific experiments</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elaborating topics with facts, definitions, and details</li> <li>Comparing different strategies related to procedures or problem-solving</li> </ul>

\*Except for Level 6, for which there is no ceiling.

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency\* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
LISTENING	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicating personal points of view in response to oral phrases or short sentences (<i>e.g., by thumbs up/thumbs down; agree/disagree cards</i>)</li> <li>Identifying preferences from short oral statements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguishing opinions from facts from peers' oral presentations</li> <li>Categorizing content-based pictures or objects from oral descriptions (<i>e.g., "animals that form groups to help members survive"</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying similarities and differences from oral content-related materials or equipment</li> <li>Identifying different points of view in short oral dialogues</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpreting oral information from different sides</li> <li>Identifying opposing sides of arguments in dialogues</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparing oral arguments with representations and models</li> <li>Identifying claims in oral presentations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying evidence to support claims/opinions from multimedia</li> <li>Following agreed-upon rules for discussions around differing opinions</li> </ul>
SPEAKING	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stating a claim or position from models or examples</li> <li>Sharing facts as evidence using sentence starters or sentence frames</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telling what comes next and showing why</li> <li>Sharing reasons for opinions or claims (<i>e.g., science experiments</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing organizing categories for content-related information (<i>e.g., fish/birds, forests/deserts</i>)</li> <li>Asking and answering questions in collaborative groups</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defend claims or opinions to content-related topics</li> <li>Posing different solutions to content-related issues or problems</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing and supporting different ideas with examples</li> <li>Providing evidence to defend own ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting personal comments to the remarks of others to build a case for ideas or opinions</li> <li>Summarizing ideas or opinions from two sides</li> </ul>

\*Except for Level 6, for which there is no ceiling.



By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency\* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
READING	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying facts in illustrated informational text read orally</li> <li>Identifying language related to likes, needs, and wants in labeled illustrations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguishing fact from fiction (<i>e.g., using sentence strips or highlighting texts</i>)</li> <li>Identifying claims or opinions in illustrated texts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying different ideas or opinions in written texts</li> <li>Identifying general academic and content-related words and phrases in text relevant to the genre/key use (<i>e.g., “once upon a time” indicates a fairy tale</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sorting content-related information according to specific criteria (<i>e.g., pros and cons</i>)</li> <li>Identifying reasons to strengthen arguments</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying data from written sources to support positions</li> <li>Matching opinions to reasons in informational texts and literature</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process arguments by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying authors’ point of view in texts</li> <li>Evaluating characters, settings, and events from a variety of media</li> </ul>
WRITING	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicating decisions or preferences through labeled pictures, words, or phrases</li> <li>Providing evidence of natural phenomena or opinions through labeled drawings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participating in shared opinion writing experiences</li> <li>Connecting preferences, choices, or opinions to reasons</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicating different content-related ideas or opinions</li> <li>Describing pros and cons related to social issues or familiar topics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting main ideas or opinions with evidence from texts</li> <li>Providing evidence to support or refute peers’ ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producing persuasive pieces supported by multiple reasons or details</li> <li>Stating reasoning for content-related choices</li> </ul>	<p><b>Argue by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elaborating on opinions and reasons</li> <li>Comparing and contrasting important points and details presented in two texts on the same topic</li> </ul>

\*Except for Level 6, for which there is no ceiling.

By the end of each of the given levels of English language proficiency\* English language learners can...

	ELP Level 1 Entering	ELP Level 2 Emerging	ELP Level 3 Developing	ELP Level 4 Expanding	ELP Level 5 Bridging	ELP Level 6 Reaching
ORAL LANGUAGE	<p><b>Discuss by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing own ideas through drawings, gestures, words and phrases</li> <li>Expressing agreement/disagreement nonverbally (<i>e.g., thumbs up or down</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discuss by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking yes or no questions to request clarification</li> <li>Recognizing how different intonation conveys different meanings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discuss by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiating agreement in small groups</li> <li>Expressing own ideas consistent with the topic discussed</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discuss by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing own ideas and supporting ideas of others</li> <li>Proposing new solutions to resolve conflict in small groups</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discuss by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiating and maintaining conversations</li> <li>Challenging ideas respectfully</li> <li>Listening to, building, and extending ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discuss by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing topic-related information</li> <li>Building on remarks of others by linking comments</li> <li>Maintaining audience engagement through specific language and body movement</li> </ul>

\*Except for Level 6, for which there is no ceiling.

## Copyright Notice

© 2016 Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, on behalf of WIDA. The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grade 2–3*, (“Can Do Descriptors”) may not be reproduced, modified, or distributed without prior written permission from WIDA. The *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grade 2–3* is for your personal, noncommercial use only. Fair use of the *WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition, Grade 2–3* includes reproduction for the purpose of teaching (including multiple copies for lesson planning).

To order more copies of this booklet, please visit the WIDA Store at <https://www.wceps.org/Store/WIDA> or call toll free 1- 877-272-5593 or e-mail [store@wceps.org](mailto:store@wceps.org).

## Acknowledgements

The development of the Can Do Descriptors represents the work of many educators in the field. WIDA would like to extend its appreciation to everyone who contributed through their expertise to this work, including the staff at the Center for Applied Linguistics for their ongoing partnership and support.

Please visit [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us) to view a full list of educators who participated on the development workshop, national experts who shared their expertise in the development process, and those who participated in the review of the Can Do descriptors.



© 2016 Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, on behalf of the WIDA Consortium

[www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)