

Literacy Level	Current NRS Basic Reading and Writing	Proposed NRS EFL Reading Skills	Proposed NRS EFL Writing Skills
<p><b>Level 1</b></p> <p><b>Beginning ABE Literacy</b></p> <p><b>Current Test Benchmark:</b> grade level 0–1.9:</p> <p><i>CASAS scale scores:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Reading: 200 and below</li> <li>· Writing: 200 and below</li> </ul>	<p>Individual has no or minimal reading and writing skills. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument. At the upper range of this level, individual can recognize, read, and write letters and numbers but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading.</p> <p>Can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear, inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks), and contains frequent errors in spelling.</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Literacy Level have some comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and are able to demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sound-letter relationships (phonetic patterns), including consonant digraphs and blends. In particular, students at this level are able to recognize and produce rhyming words, blend and segment onsets and rhymes, isolate and pronounce initial, medial, and final sounds, add or substitute individual sounds, and blend and segment single syllable words. They are able to decode two-syllable words following basic patterns as well as recognize common high frequency words by sight. Individuals are able to read simple decodable texts with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression. They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases in texts.</p> <p>Individuals ready to exit this level are able to determine main ideas, retell key details, and ask and answer questions about those key details in texts. Individuals are also able to use the illustrations and details in a text, whether print or digital, to describe its key ideas (e.g., maps, charts, photographs, cartoons). They are able to use text features, both print and digital, to locate key facts or information. They are able to identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text, describe the connections between ideas within a text, and examine the basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic.</p>	<p><i>Writing:</i> Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Literacy Level are able to write basic sight words and familiar words and phrases as they compose simple sentences or phrases. This includes writing simple informative texts in which they supply some facts about a topic and narratives that include some details regarding what happened. They use simple transition and temporal words to signal event order (e.g., so, and, because, when, next, finally). With support, they are able to gather and use information from provided sources, both print and digital, to answer a simple research question.</p>

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<p><b>Level 2</b></p> <p><b>Beginning Basic Education</b></p> <p><b>Current Test Benchmark:</b> grade level 2–3.9:</p> <p><i>CASAS scale scores:</i> · Reading: 201–210 · Writing: 201–225</p>	<p>Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary;</p> <p>can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety, but individual shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense) and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Basic Level are able to decode multi-syllable words, distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words, and recognize the spelling-sound correspondences for common vowel teams. They also are able to identify and understand the meaning of the most common prefixes and suffixes. They can read common irregular sight words. Individuals are able to read level appropriate texts with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression. They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases in level-appropriate complex texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to determine main ideas, ask and answer questions about key details in texts and show how those details support the main idea. They are able to describe the relationship between ideas in a text in terms of time, sequence, and cause/effect, as well as use text features and search tools, both print and digital, to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently. Individuals also are able to explain how specific aspects of both digital and print illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words of a text. They are able to describe how reasons support specific points an author makes in a text and identify the author’s main purpose or what the author wants to answer, explain or describe, as well as distinguish their own point of view from that of the author’s. Finally, they are able to compare and contrast the most important points and key details of two texts on the same topic.</p>	<p><i>Writing:</i> Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Basic Level are able to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. This includes writing simple informative texts in which they examine a topic and convey information clearly. They also are able to write narratives with details that describe actions, thoughts, and feelings. They use transition and temporal words (e.g., also, another, more, but) to link ideas and signal event order. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others. They are able to conduct short research projects and summarize their learning in print. This includes taking brief notes from both print and digital sources, and sorting evidence into provided categories.</p>

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<p><b>Level 3</b></p> <p><b>Low Intermediate Basic Education</b></p> <p><b>Current Test Benchmark:</b> grade level 4–5.):</p> <p>CASAS scale scores:            · Reading: 211–220            · Writing: 226–242</p>	<p>Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions;</p> <p>can write simple paragraphs with a main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; and can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Individuals ready to exit the Low Intermediate Level are able to read fluently text of the complexity demanded of this level. They are able to use knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and roots and affixes to accurately decode unfamiliar words. They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases (e.g., metaphors and similes) in level-appropriate complex texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to make logical inferences, summarize central ideas or themes, and explain how they are supported by key details. They are able to explain events, procedures, or ideas in historical, scientific, or technical texts, including what happened and why. They are able to describe the overall structure of a text and compare and contrast the structures of two texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are also able to interpret information presented visually, orally or quantitatively to find an answer to a question or solve a problem. They display this facility with both print and digital media. Individuals are able to explain how authors use reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text and can integrate information from several texts, whether print, media, or a mix, on the same topic. They are able to describe how point of view influences how events are described. They are able to analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting similarities and differences in the point of view they represent. They consistently produce valid evidence for their findings and assertions.</p>	<p><i>Writing:</i> Individuals ready to exit the Low Intermediate Level are able to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with facts and logically ordered reasons. They are able to produce informative texts in which they develop a topic with concrete facts and details. They convey information clearly with precise language and well-organized paragraphs. They link ideas, opinions and reasons with words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., another, specifically, consequently, because). They are also able to use technology (including the Internet) to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others. They are able to conduct short research projects, making frequent use of on-line as well as print sources. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. They are able to summarize or paraphrase information from and provide a list of those sources.</p>

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<p><b>Level 4</b></p> <p><b>High Intermediate Basic Education</b></p> <p><b>Current Test Benchmark:</b> grade level 6–8.9:</p> <p>CASAS scale scores: · Reading: 221–235 · Writing: 243–260</p>	<p>Individual is able to read simple descriptions and narratives on familiar subjects or from which new vocabulary can be determined by context and can make some minimal inferences about familiar texts and compare and contrast information from such texts but not consistently.</p> <p>The individual can write simple narrative descriptions and short essays on familiar topics and has consistent use of basic punctuation but makes grammatical errors with complex structures.</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Individuals who are ready to exit the High Intermediate Level are able to read fluently text of the complexity demanded of this level. They display increasing facility with academic vocabulary and are able to analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone in level-appropriate complex texts.</p> <p>Individuals are able to make logical inferences by offering several pieces of textual evidence. This includes citing evidence to support the analysis of primary and secondary sources in history, as well as analysis of science and technical texts. They are able to summarize and analyze central ideas, including how they are conveyed through particular details in the text. They also are able to analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between ideas or events and how major sections of a text contribute to the development of the ideas. They also are able to follow multistep procedures. Individuals are able to identify aspects of a text that reveal point of view and assess how point of view shapes style and content in texts. In addition, they are able to evaluate the validity of specific claims an author makes through the sufficiency of the reasoning and evidence supplied in the text. This includes analyzing how an author responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. They are able to analyze how multiple texts address similar themes, including how authors acknowledge and respond to conflicting evidence or viewpoints and include or avoid particular facts. Individuals are also able to analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media as well as integrate and evaluate content from those sources, including quantitative or technical information presented visually and in words. They are able to produce valid evidence for their findings and assertions, make sound decisions, and solve problems.</p>	<p><i>Writing:</i> Writing in response to one or more text(s), individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts (this includes the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes). When writing arguments, they are able to introduce claims, acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence, and organize them logically in a manner that demonstrates an understanding of the topic. When writing informative texts, individuals are able to examine a topic through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant facts, concrete details, quotations and other information to aid comprehension. Individuals create cohesion in their writing by clarifying the relationships among ideas, reasons, and evidence; using appropriate transitions; and including a logical progression of ideas, and maintaining consistency in style and tone. Individuals are able to use specific word choices appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. They also are able to use technology to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources. They conduct short research projects, drawing on several sources. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to locate and organize information, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and communicate the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism.</p>

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<p><b>Level 5</b></p> <p><b>Low Adult Secondary Education</b></p> <p><b>Current Test Benchmark grade level 9–10.9:</b></p> <p><i>CASAS scale scores:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Reading: 236–245</li> <li>· Writing: 261–270</li> </ul>	<p>Individual can comprehend expository writing and identify spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors; can comprehend a variety of materials such as periodicals and nontechnical journals on common topics; can comprehend library reference materials and compose multi-paragraph essays;</p> <p>can listen to oral instructions and write an accurate synthesis of them; and can identify the main idea in reading selections and use a variety of context issues to determine meaning.</p> <p>Writing is organized and cohesive with few mechanical errors; can write using a complex sentence structure; and can write personal notes and letters that accurately reflect thoughts.</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Individuals who are ready to exit Low Adult Secondary Level are able to read fluently texts that measure at the secondary level of complexity. This includes increasing facility with academic vocabulary and figurative language in level-appropriate complex texts. This includes determining the meaning of symbols and key terms used in a specific scientific or technical context. They are able to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. Individuals are able to make logical and well-supported inferences about those complex texts. They are able to analyze the development of central ideas over the course of a text and explain how they are refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or portions of text. They are able to provide an objective summary of a text. They are able to analyze in detail a series of events described in text and determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. They also are able to follow complex multistep directions or procedures. Individuals are able to compare the point of view of two or more authors writing about the same or similar topics. They are able to evaluate the validity of specific claims an author makes through the sufficiency and relevance of the reasoning and evidence supplied. They also are able to identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. They are able to analyze how multiple texts address related themes and concepts, including challenging texts, such as seminal US documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington’s Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address). In addition, they are able to contrast the findings presented in a text, noting whether those findings support or contradict previous explanations or accounts. Individuals are also able to translate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., a table or chart) and translate information expressed visually or mathematically into</p>	<p><i>Writing:</i> Writing in response to one or more text(s), individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts (this includes the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes). When writing arguments, they are able to introduce precise claims, distinguish the claims from alternate or opposing claims, and support claims with clear reasons and relevant and sufficient evidence. When writing informative texts, they are able to examine a topic through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of well chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic. They use appropriate and varied transitions as well as consistency in style and tone to link major sections of the text, create cohesion, and establish clear relationships among claims, reasons, and evidence. Individuals use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. They are also able to take advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and display information flexibly and dynamically. They conduct short research projects as well as more sustained research projects that require the synthesis of multiple sources to make informed decisions and solve problems. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to gather and organize information, assess the credibility, accuracy, and usefulness of each source,</p>

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		words. Through their reading and research, they are able to cite strong and thorough textual evidence for their findings and assertions to make informed decisions and solve problems.	and communicate the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism.
<p><b>Level 6</b></p> <p><b>High Adult Secondary Education</b></p> <p><b>Current Test Benchmark:</b> grade level 11–12:</p> <p><i>CASAS scale scores:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Reading: 246 and above</li> <li>· Writing: 271 and above</li> </ul>	<p>Individual can comprehend, explain, and analyze information from a variety of literacy works, including primary source materials and professional journals, and can use context cues and higher order processes to interpret meaning of written material.</p> <p>Writing is cohesive with clearly expressed ideas supported by relevant detail, and individual can use varied and complex sentence structures with few mechanical errors.</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i> Individuals who are ready to exit High Adult Secondary Level are able to read fluently at the college and career readiness level of text complexity. This includes increasing facility with academic vocabulary and figurative language sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level. They are able to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. Individuals are able to make logical and well-supported inferences about those complex texts. They are able to summarize the challenging ideas, concepts or processes contained within them. They are able to paraphrase texts in simpler but still accurate terms. Whether they are conducting analyses of complex primary and secondary sources in history or in scientific and technical texts, they are able to analyze how the ideas and concepts within them develop and interact. Individuals are able to assess how points of view shape style and content in texts with particular attention to distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement). Individuals are able to analyze how multiple texts address related themes and concepts, including challenging texts such as US founding documents (Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights). In addition, they are able to compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. Individuals are also able to integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media in order to address a question. Through their reading and research at complex levels,</p>	<p><i>Writing:</i> Writing in response to one or more text(s), individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts (this includes the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes). When writing arguments, they are able to create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), counterclaim(s), reasons and evidence. They fully develop claims and counterclaims, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns. When writing informative texts, they are able to organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions through the effective selection and analysis of content. They use appropriate and varied transitions to clarify the relationships among complex ideas, create cohesion, and link major sections of the text. Individuals are able to maintain a formal style while they attend to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. They are also able to take advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and display information flexibly and dynamically. They conduct short research projects as well as more sustained research projects that require the synthesis of multiple complex</p>

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		they are able to cite strong and thorough textual evidence for their findings and assertions to make sound decisions and solve problems.	sources to make informed decisions and solve problems. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to gather and organize information, assess the credibility, accuracy, and usefulness of each source in answering the research question, noting any discrepancies among the data collected.

Note for current descriptors: The descriptors are entry-level descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.