# Multilingual Learning Look-for Tool:

Instructional Practices to Support Multilingual Learners (MLs)

DESE Instructional Planning and Observation Tools Collection

Guiding Questions

* To what extent are MLs experiencing rich, content-embedded, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction that supports their engagement with grade-level work and promotes deeper learning and language development, across program models and instructional settings?
* To what extent is the MA Vision & Blueprint for English Learner Success evident in classroom practice?

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| About this ToolThe Multilingual Learning Look-for Toolarticulates essential expectations for effective teaching and learning aligned to the [DESE Educational Vision](https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/vision/default.html), the [MA Blueprint for English Learner Success](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/dashboard.html), and the [Standards of Effective Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/standards/default.html).The Look-Fors below feature elements of effective instruction for MLs, which are aligned to specific pillars and building blocks from the [MA Blueprint for English Learner Success](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/dashboard.html). These pillars and building blocks are prioritized because they are most visible in classroom instruction. There are observable teacher and student actions aligned to each element. These actions break down and make visible [culturally & linguistically sustaining practices](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/culturally-sustaining/default.html) that are essential across *all* classrooms that serve MLs, which can include sheltered content instruction, ESL, bilingual/dual language, and should apply across instructional models (push-in, pull-out, standalone, embedded, co-teaching, etc.). |

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|  | Classroom Observation |
| Subject: |  |  | Part of Lesson Observed: Beginning, Middle, End: |  |
|  | Grade Level:  |  |  | Number Students and Teachers: |  |
|  | Setting: | o [ESL](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/fundamentals/default.html) o [SEI](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/programs/sei.html) o [DLE](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/programs/dle.html) o [TBE](https://doe.mass.edu/ele/programs/tbe.html) o Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  | If ESL, indicate delivery model: | o [Push-in](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/fundamentals/delivery-approach/push-in.html)  o [Pull-out](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/fundamentals/delivery-approach/pull-out.html)  o [Co-teaching](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/fundamentals/delivery-approach/co-teaching.html) o [Embedded](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/fundamentals/delivery-approach/embedded.html)o [Self-contained](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/esl-toolkit/fundamentals/delivery-approach/self-contained.html) |
|  | Range of English proficiency levels, if known: |  |

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| Low Inference Observation NotesDescribe the assignment or activity. What is the teacher doing? What are students doing (all students, x number of students)? If possible, note known or identifiable student groups represented in the room (multilingual learners, students with disabilities, etc.). |
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| Grade-level content standards addressed: Language objective addressed:High-quality instructional materials (HQIM) used: |

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| **Section 1: Learning Environment****(**[**Pillar 1, Building Block 1**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/pillar1/p1b1-classroom.html) [**Pillar 2, Building Block 1**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/pillar2/p2b1-classroom.html)**)** | *MLs have equitable access to clean, safe, well-organized learning spaces that promote development of positive learning communities. Print-rich spaces feature materials that honor students’ cultural and linguistic identities, scaffold classroom expectations and routines, and support meaningful engagement in learning.*Connections to [Standards of Effective Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/standards/default.html): II-A-3, II-B-1  |
| **What are the teacher(s) doing?** | **What are the students doing?** |
| * A. Providing a physical learning space that is clean, safe, organized, and includes the resources necessary to support a welcoming learning community.
* B. Effectively implementingclassroom routines, expectations, and shared normsfor a positive learning community that fosters mutual respect and encourages students to take academic risks; routines are clear and accessible to students.
* C. Maintainingclassroom displays (posters/charts/visuals) that provide **social**, **instructional**, and **disciplinary language** models, support access to grade-level content, showcase student work, and promote student interaction.
* D. Utilizing awide range and abundance of books, print material, and **multimodal texts** that honor students’ backgrounds, promote cultural and linguistic diversity, and provides **windows, mirrors, and doors.**
 | * a. Utilizing a variety of resources in the classroom, including displays, books and print material, multimodal texts, learning tools such as bilingual dictionaries, etc.
* b. Taking ownership and demonstrating investment in the classroom's routines, expectations, and shared norms to support their learning and participate in the classroom community.
* c. Building their own positive identities as self-directed learners in the classroom through interactions with peers, teachers, and resources.
* d. Engaging with peers respectfully and supporting one another's learning so that all members of the learning community feel comfortable taking risks.
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| * All elements observed
 | * Many elements observed
 | * Few elements observed
 | * No elements observed
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| **Notes / Evidence:**  |

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| **Section 2: Assets Orientation****(**[**Pillar 1, Building Block 3**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/pillar1/p1b3-classroom.html)**;**[**Pillar 3 Building Block 1**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/pillar3/p3b1-classroom.html)**)** | *Instruction leverages students’ home languages, cultures, experiences and interests, and connects to students’ life outside of school. It builds on what students can do and is carefully planned and adjusted in real time based on student progress and an understanding of language acquisition.*Connections to [Standards of Effective Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/standards/default.html): II-A-3, II-B-3, II-D  |
| **What are the teacher(s) doing?** | **What are the students doing?** |
| * A. Promoting bi/multilingualism as a resource for learning (e.g. promoting **translanguaging** practices, **providing home language support**, identifying **cross-language connections like** **cognates**, etc.).
* B. Implementing carefully sequenced and structured activities that draw from students’ prior knowledge, cultural and linguistic resources, and skills.
 | * a. Using a range of linguistic resources (in home language and/or English) to explore new concepts and engage with peers and teachers.
* b. Using all their language knowledge, including home language, to learn English (e.g. translanguaging, identifying cross-language connections like cognates, etc.)
* c. Connecting new concepts to their prior knowledge and cultural assets.
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| * All elements observed
 | * Many elements observed
 | * Few elements observed
 | * No elements observed
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| **Notes / Evidence:**  |

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| **Section 3: Purposeful & Authentic Interaction****(**[**Pillar 3, Building Block 2**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/pillar3/p3b2-classroom.html)**)** | *Instruction promotes students’ ability to use English for academic, social, and instructional purposes across modes of communication (listening, speaking, reading, & writing). It makes language visible, focusing on vocabulary, grammatical structures, and discourse practices within rich, authentic interaction with peers and teachers.*Connections to [Standards of Effective Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/standards/default.html): II-A-3, II-B-2  |
| **What are the teacher(s) doing?** | **What are the students doing?** |
| * A. Facilitating frequent and intentional opportunities for student-to-student and student-to-adult discourse, using **flexible student groupings and facilitation strategies**, to promote authentic interaction for students at all proficiency levels.
* B. Encouraging students to elaborate on their responses and use target **language forms and features**, with **appropriate scaffolds** as needed.
* C. Balancing the teaching of disciplinary-specific language forms and features with activities focused on **meaning-making and authentic communication**.
 | * a. Actively participating in **high-quality conversations** with peers and teachers (in pairs, small groups, and whole-group activities).
* b. Engaging in daily opportunities for extended practice with target language forms and features to communicate across language domains (listening, speaking, reading, & writing).
* c. Selecting appropriate scaffolds (as needed) and multimodal resources to engage in purposeful communication with peers and teachers, negotiate meaning with complex texts and tasks, and learn grade-appropriate content.
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| * All elements observed
 | * Many elements observed
 | * Few elements observed
 | * No elements observed
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| **Notes / Evidence:**  |

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| **Section 4: Rigorous & Meaningful Opportunities to Learn****(**[**Pillar 2, Building Block 2**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/pillar2/p2b2-classroom.html) [**Pillar 3, Building Block 1**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/pillar3/p3b1-classroom.html)**)** | *Instruction is standards-aligned and intellectually stimulating, promoting real-world, relevant problem-solving through purposeful, grade-appropriate tasks. It helps students learn and use strategies for thinking and using language and develop increasing autonomy through appropriate and flexible scaffolds, productive struggle and regular feedback.*Connections to [Standards of Effective Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/standards/default.html): I-A-3. I-B, I-C-3, II-A |
| **What are the teacher(s) doing?** | **What are the students doing?** |
| * A. Facilitating instruction with an explicit daily **language objective,** which builds toward larger unit **language expectations,** helping students learn and practice specific languages forms, features, and genres characteristic of the discipline. (aligned with **MA Frameworks** *and* **WIDA ELD Standards**).
* B. Implementing carefully sequenced and structured activities aligned to objectives and unit expectations that build in complexity, with supports and scaffolds (including **assessment accommodations**) appropriate to students’ **English proficiency levels.**
* C. Modeling and scaffolding students from guided practice to independent application over the course of a lesson and/or unit.
* D. Checking for understanding, gathering evidence of student learning and language development through formative and summative assessment, and adjusting instruction accordingly.
* E. Setting clear success criteria, fostering student ownership over learning and language goals, and providing frequent and meaningful feedback to students on their progress.
 | * a. Engaging with grade-appropriate content, texts, and tasks, using appropriate scaffolds as needed to make sense of new concepts.
* b. Setting short-term and long-term goals for their content-learning and language growth, using student-friendly rubrics and success criteria; reflecting on their growth and monitoring progress toward goals through self-assessment.
* c. Receiving and giving regular feedback (via teachers and peers) on their learning and language development and incorporating this feedback to make revisions.
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| * All elements observed
 | * Many elements observed
 | * Few elements observed
 | * No elements observed
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| **Notes / Evidence:**  |