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# The 2026 Texas ELPS Quick Reference

A free companion to the full course. Reference, scaffolds, and the five-level system at a glance.

- The five proficiency levels at a glance
- All 12 course modules condensed to four bullets each
- Scaffold cheat sheet by proficiency level
- How to earn the free 1-hour CPE credential

**100% FREE**

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# What's inside

This guide is the printable companion to the free ELPS Online Helper at [apps.enablinglearning.com/elps-online-helper](https://apps.enablinglearning.com/elps-online-helper). Use it at your desk, in PLC meetings, or pass it along to a colleague.

- **The five proficiency levels** at a glance (page 2)
- **All 12 modules** condensed to four bullets each (pages 3-6)
- **Scaffold cheat sheet** by proficiency level (page 7)
- **How to earn the credential** + a tip jar of free tools (page 7)

Want the interactive version with the AI lesson plan generator and Verónica AI teaching assistant? Visit the app at [apps.enablinglearning.com/elps-online-helper/](https://apps.enablinglearning.com/elps-online-helper/).

## The five proficiency levels at a glance

Level	Capsule
<b>Pre-Production</b>	Silent period; comprehensible input only.
<b>Beginning</b>	Single words, set phrases, gestures, visuals.
<b>Intermediate</b>	Connected sentences with frequent scaffolds.
<b>High Intermediate</b>	Paragraph-level academic language with targeted support.
<b>Advanced</b>	Near-grade-level academic language across domains.

Source: 19 TAC Chapter 120, Subchapter B. PLDs are asset-based; each level names what students CAN do.

# Modules 1 - 6

## 1 What Are ELPS?

- ELPS describe what emergent bilingual students can do with English at each proficiency level.
- They apply to all EB students in Texas public schools, K-12, in every program model.
- Coverage spans four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.
- Adopted by SBOE in September 2024 and published at 19 TAC Chapter 120, Subchapter B; the prior ELPS (19 TAC §74.4) remain in effect in classrooms until 2026-2027.

## 2 ELPS and the Law

- Texas Education Code Chapter 29 establishes services for emergent bilingual students.
- 19 TAC Chapter 89 operationalizes those services, including LPAC and program models.
- The LPAC makes identification and placement decisions, not individual teachers.
- Federal foundations: Title VI, Lau v. Nichols (1974), Equal Educational Opportunities Act.

## 3 What Changed in 2026?

- 5 proficiency levels — Pre-Production added at the entry point.
- Content-Based Language Instruction (CBLI) is now required across all content areas.
- PLDs are written separately for K-3 and 4-12, reflecting different literacy trajectories.
- Adopted by SBOE September 2024 and effective in TAC February 2, 2025; classroom implementation begins with the 2026-2027 school year.

## 4 The 5-Level Proficiency System

- Pre-Production, Beginning, Intermediate, High Intermediate, Advanced.
- PLDs describe what students CAN do — asset-based, not deficit-based.
- Pre-Production captures the silent period; honor it with comprehensible input.
- Levels can differ across domains for the same student.

## 5 ELPS in Your Classroom

- Effective ELPS implementation pairs linguistic scaffolds with content instruction.
- Sentence stems, visuals, and partner protocols are baseline, not optional.
- Honor the silent period; do not force oral production at Pre-Production.
- Heterogeneous grouping with intentional scaffolds usually outperforms tracking.

## **6 Writing Language Objectives**

- A language objective specifies how students will USE listening, speaking, reading, writing.
- It is distinct from the content objective (the TEKS); both belong in a lesson plan.
- Good objectives name language function, modality, and linguistic support.
- Without one, content instruction often becomes inaccessible to emergent bilinguals.

# Modules 7 - 12

## 7 K-3 vs. 4-12

- Two grade bands: K-3 and 4-12.
- K-3 PLDs emphasize emerging literacy; 4-12 PLDs emphasize transferring skills.
- The 2026 ELPS publish fully separate PLDs for K-3 and 4-12 in all four language domains.
- Match scaffolds to the band, not just the proficiency level.

## 8 ELPS by Content Area

- ELPS apply across Math, Science, Social Studies, ELAR, and all other content areas.
- Every content teacher of an EB student is an ELPS implementer.
- Academic language varies by discipline; scaffolds should be content-specific.
- CBLI integrates language and content; sequential "first ESL, then content" is outdated.

## 9 Scaffolding Strategies

- Linguistic scaffolds (stems, frames, models) make academic language accessible.
- Content scaffolds (organizers, visuals, manipulatives) make ideas accessible.
- Engagement scaffolds (partner protocols, structured talk) lower the affective filter.
- Remove scaffolds gradually as proficiency develops.

## 10 Using TELPAS Data

- TELPAS rates students annually across four domains.
- Grades 2-12 take two online TELPAS assessments, listening + speaking and reading + writing, administered on separate days.
- K-1 students are rated holistically by their teachers across all four domains.
- Map current ratings to next-step scaffolds; do not just file the score.

## 11 Supporting Long-Term ELs

- LTELs are generally defined as students classified as English learners for five or more years; TEA publishes no single official definition.
- Many have strong oral English (BICS) but gaps in academic English (CALP).
- Asset-based instruction targeting CALP closes the gap faster than deficit framing.
- Cummins' BICS/CALP distinction is the load-bearing theoretical frame here.

## **12 ELPS Classroom Scenarios**

- Match scaffolds to each student's proficiency level and language goal.
- Targeted feedback on 1-2 patterns beats mass error correction.
- Newcomers need non-verbal options; LTELs need academic-language stretches.
- Ask: "Does this honor the current level AND advance the next?"

# Scaffold cheat sheet

Level	Linguistic scaffolds	Content scaffolds	Engagement scaffolds
<b>Pre-Production</b>	Pictures + labels, gesture, single-word stems	Realia, manipulatives, TPR	Silent participation, point-to-respond
<b>Beginning</b>	Sentence frames, anchor charts, word banks	Visual flow diagrams, bilingual glossaries	Pair share with stem cards
<b>Intermediate</b>	Compound stems, transition words, model paragraphs	Annotated readings, graphic organizers	Structured partner talk, jigsaw
<b>High Intermediate</b>	Discipline-specific frames, summarizing stems	Two-column notes, claim-evidence templates	Socratic seminar with prep time
<b>Advanced</b>	Targeted feedback on register, academic verb stretches	Primary sources, multi-step problem sets	Open discussion, peer review

## Want 1 hour of TEA-approved CPE credit?

Visit [apps.enablinglearning.com/elps-online-helper/learn](https://apps.enablinglearning.com/elps-online-helper/learn), complete the 12 modules, and pass the capstone evaluation (80%). You will receive a verified digital credential issued by POK on behalf of Enabling Learning, a TEA-approved CPE provider. The entire course is free.

## More free tools waiting for you

- **AI Lesson Plan Generator** at [/assistant/lesson-plan](#) — pre-aligned with TEKS + ELPS, with sentence stems built in.
- **Verónica AI teaching assistant** — ask any ELPS question; grounded in the same TEA-verified content as this guide.
- **Reference flipbook** at [/grades-4-12](#) and [/kinder-3](#) — every PLD by proficiency level, domain, and content area.

If this guide saves you time, tell a colleague. We measure success by how many Texas teachers reach the credential, not by what we charge.