MLS User Manual

Updated May, 2022

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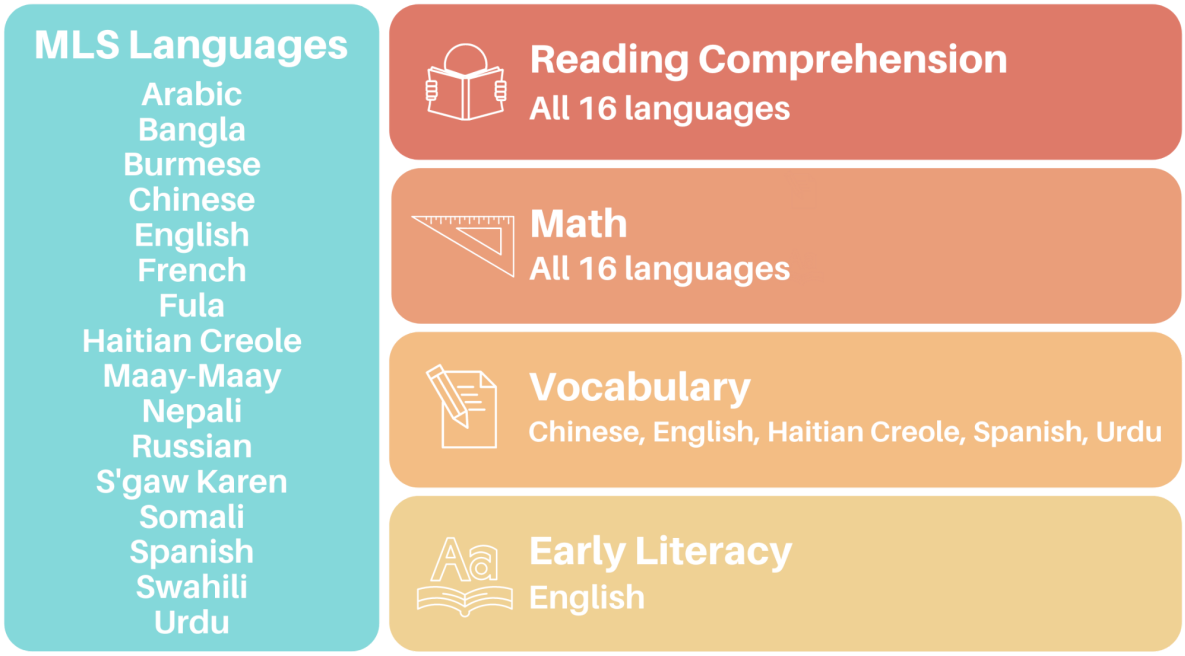
Introduction

Overview

The Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener (MLS) is an online, semi-adaptive suite of assessments designed to provide educators in New York State with information about the home-language literacy and math skills of Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE). The MLS is part of New York State's SIFE Identification Process, is featured prominently on NYSED's Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages SIFE Resources website and is strongly recommended for all New York state schools. The MLS provides teachers with an automatically generated summary of students' home language literacy skills so that teachers can design instruction appropriately. The MLS has four modules: Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, Early Literacy and Mathematics, and is available in 16 languages: Arabic, Bangla, Burmese, Simplified Chinese, English, French, Fula, Haitian Creole, Maay-Maay, Nepali, Russian, S'gaw Karen, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, and Urdu.



History of the MLS

The MLS was created by an expert team of educators, linguists, and researchers from the Second Language Acquisition Lab (SLAL) and the Research Institute for the Study of Language in Urban Society (RISLUS) at The Graduate Center, City University of New York. The project is commissioned by the New York State Education Department, Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL), and as of July 2020 is currently operated out of CUNY Queens College.

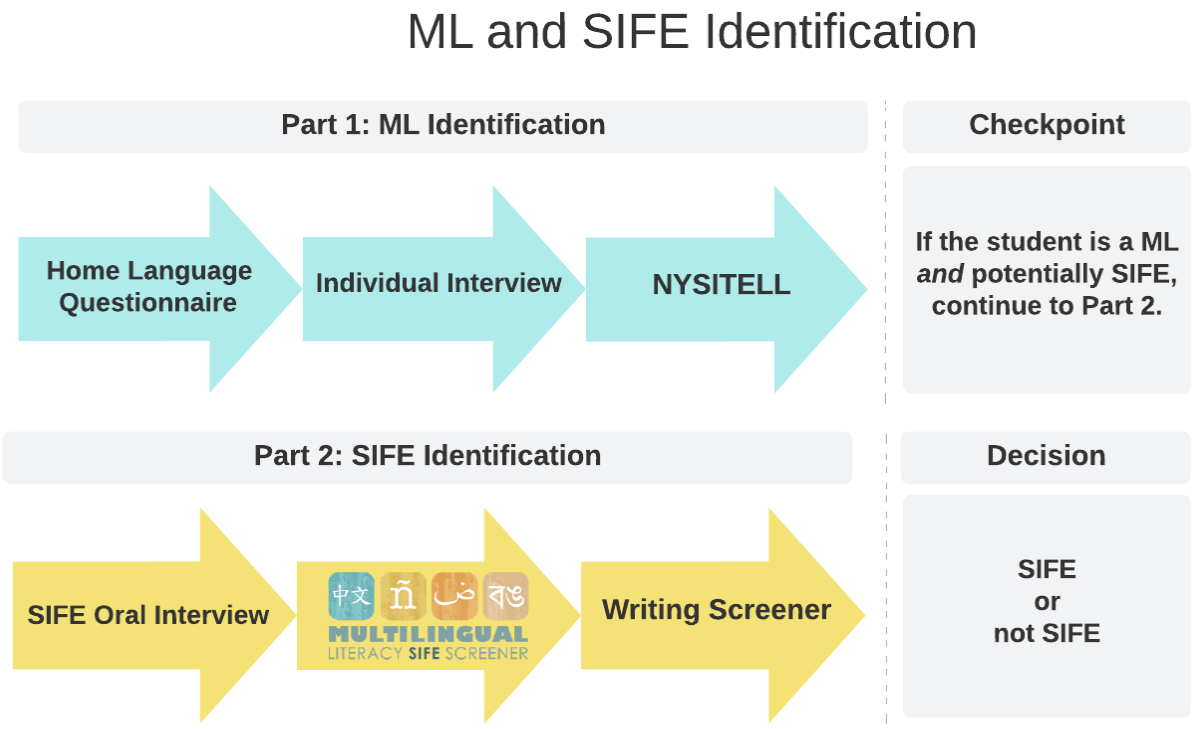
The MLS is the current instantiation of a project that began as a RISLUS research program in 2005 (the SIFE Assessment Project, funded by NYC DOE 2005-2008). The New York City Department of Education commissioned RISLUS to help them better understand how to serve their SIFE students, a population that was and still is especially high-risk for dropping out of high school. Students were assessed on the ALLD, a literacy assessment RISLUS developed in Spanish for testing new immigrants to the US. The reports that summarize the outcomes of that research (Klein & Martohardjono, 2006; 2009) found that (1) SIFE students need to acquire both English

language and literacy skills and develop background knowledge in order to access grade level academic content, and (2) further developing native language literacy fosters English language learning, especially for SIFE students.

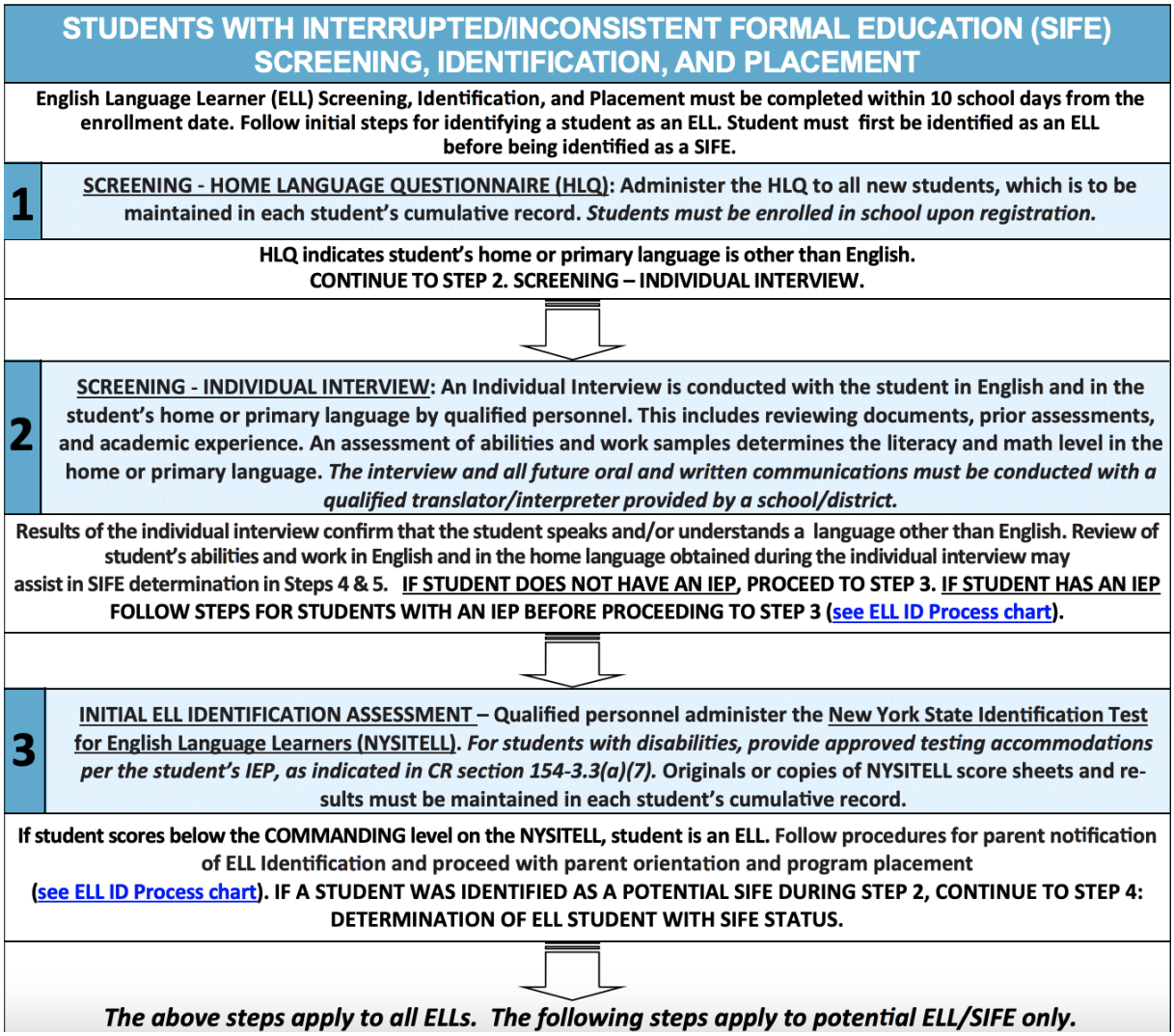
In order to help educators serve this vulnerable population, the RISLUS team recommended development of home language literacy assessments, and curricular materials tailored specifically to the needs and backgrounds of SIFE students. In 2011 NYC DOE awarded RISLUS a five-year contract for several projects relating to English Language Learner services, including work on a home language literacy screener in five languages. The resulting assessment in Arabic, Bangla, English, Simplified Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Spanish became the Literacy Evaluation for Newcomer Students (LENS) used in New York City in 2011-12. The LENS grew to include Urdu, S'gaw-Karen and Maay Maay in 2013-14. It also transitioned from being a paper and pencil test to an online test entirely conducted in the home language, which could automatically generate teacher reports. In 2016, NYSED took over sponsorship and the battery of tests, first called the Multilingual Literacy Diagnostic (MLD), and now called the Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener (MLS), became accessible to schools across New York State. In 2017, the MLS expanded to include Burmese, French, Fula, Nepali, Russian, Somali, and Swahili, rounding out the 16 languages currently available.

SIFE Identification

NYSED's official definition of SIFE students is as follows: *Students with Inconsistent/Interrupted Formal Education shall mean English Language Learners who have attended schools in the United States for less than twelve months and who, upon initial enrollment in such schools are two or more years below grade level in literacy in their home language and/or two or more years below grade level in math due to inconsistent or interrupted schooling prior to arrival in the United States* (NYSED Commissioner's Regulations §154-2.2 (y)).

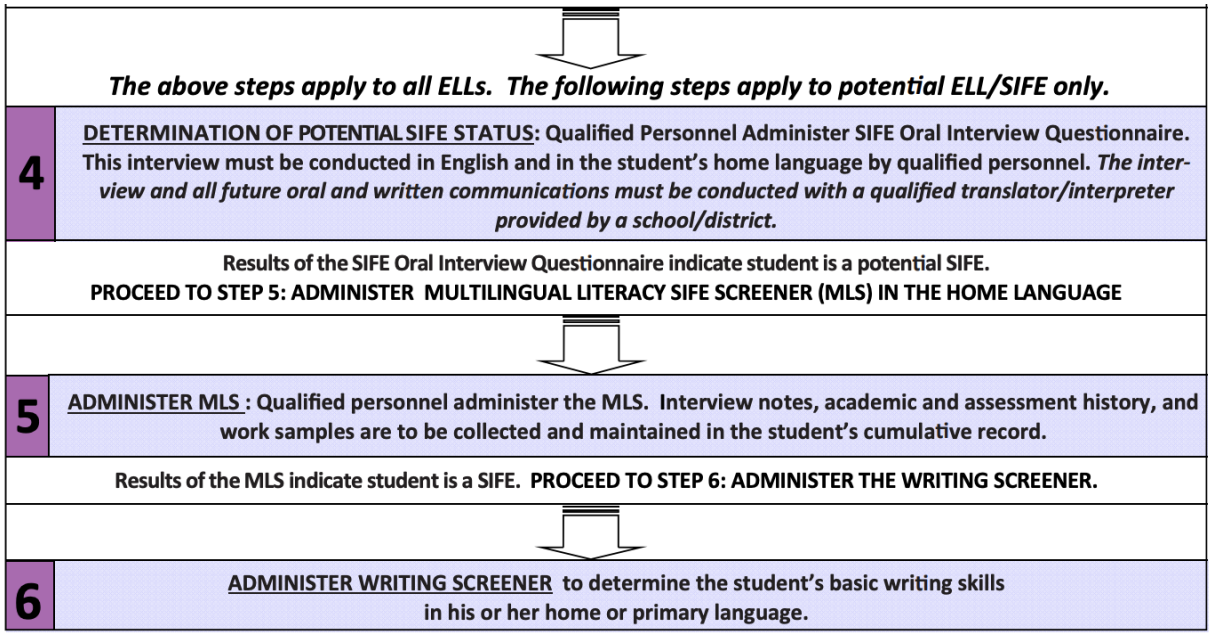


In order to determine SIFE status, schools must first determine a student's status as an English Learner. This is accomplished by following the ML/ELL identification process. This process includes administering the Home Language Questionnaire, the Individual Interview, and the NYSITELL. More information is provided in the chart from New York State's SIFE Identification Process. Information about this process and all of the relevant tools is available on the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages SIFE Resources website.



Reference: New York State Education Department. (2016). Students with Interrupted Formal Education, Questions 115 and Answers, General Information Identification and Placement Curriculum. Retrieved from http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/bilingual-ed/sifeflowchart9_20_16.pdf

After ELL/ML status has been established, to determine if the student qualifies as SIFE, the SIFE Oral Questionnaire should be administered (see guidance), followed by the MLS and the writing screener in the home language, where possible. The MLS is a tool for SIFE Identification. The purpose of the MLS within the context of all these screeners and questionnaires is to measure academic literacy skills in students' home languages which are transferable to the new language. The MLS teacher reports provide schools with specific information about students' strengths and weaknesses in home language reading and math skills. The SIFE Identification process is also described in detail in the Bridges SIFE Manual.



Reference: New York State Education Department. (2016). Students with Interrupted Formal Education, Questions 115 and Answers, General Information Identification and Placement Curriculum. Retrieved from http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/bilingual-ed/sifeflowchart9_20_16.pdf

MLS Test Types

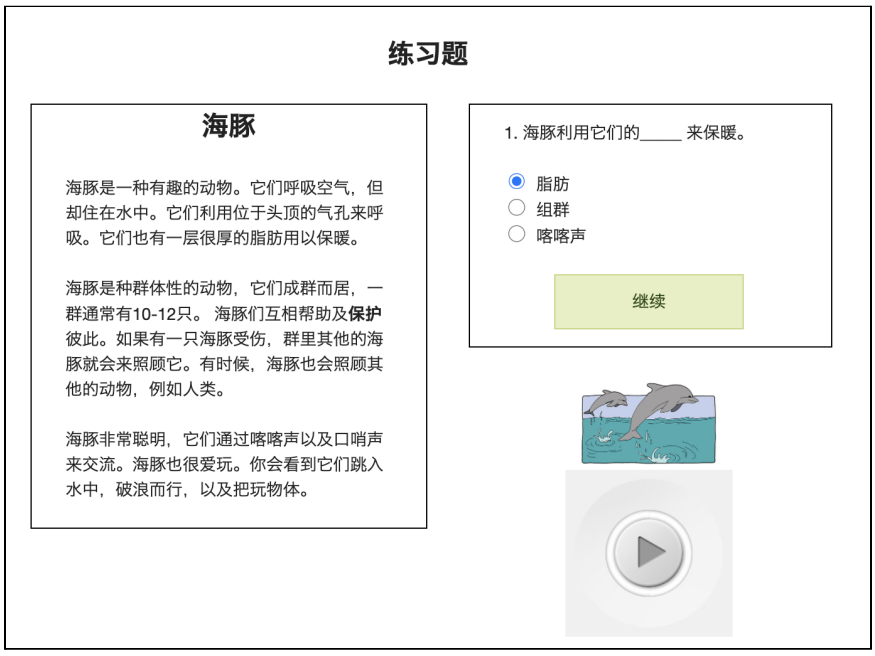
The MLS has four test types. All tests begin with a practice section with audio recordings of a welcome message, instructions and question examples, in the language of the test as they begin each test. All tests are self-paced and the length of administration time depends on the student's performance. The tests are semi-adaptive, and once the student's grade placement is determined, the test stops. Students who take the same test won't necessarily see the same questions as each other, and may take different amounts of time to complete the tests. See below for a description of each test.

Original MLS Reading Comprehension Test

The MLS uses culturally-appropriate reading passages which are authentic, original texts written by native speakers and education experts. Passages were created to avoid region-specific vocabulary and to be appropriate for the particular regions that SIFE students are coming from. Text types and topics were selected according to popular home language literary traditions and genres familiar to newcomer students. Passages and question types may differ by language in order to match home-country testing conventions. Reading passages are aligned with the home language and home country's standards, which means the alignment may be different from US standards.

The MLS in 15 languages measures reading comprehension skills for grades three through nine. The MLS is culturally appropriate for each home language. The passages were developed so the topics are interesting to high-school aged students even for the lower literacy level passages.

The reading comprehension test has different passage types: literary, informational, functional, and persuasive. Students answer initial understanding questions which are along the lines of details they can pick out of the text. For example, '*Who needed help in the story?*', is an initial understanding question. Students also answer interpretation questions, such as '*Finding the fruit made Martha feel…*'. Students select the answer from the multiple choice options. The student performance report shows the division between how the student performs on the interpretation versus the initial understanding questions.



During each practice session, the student will first hear oral instructions in their home language on how to take the test and answer the questions. The audio plays, and the student has to listen to the full audio before moving on to the first question. In the Original MLS Reading Comprehension, the questions for the practice section have to be answered correctly in order for the test to advance. After the practice session, there's no more audio.

Spanish MLS Reading Comprehension Test with New Features

In May 2022, the MLS Reading Comprehension test in Spanish was updated to include additional features. Key features include:

- Computer literacy check
- Extended testing range K-9
- Reduced test taking time
- Detailed breakdown of performance on home-language standards articulated through the NGLS

The practice section includes a quick computer literacy check. The student hears the prompt:

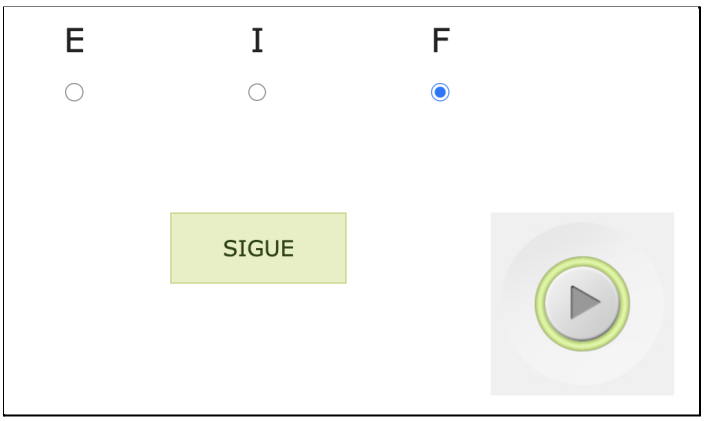
First, click on the circle next to the pencil that you see on the screen. Then click the green rectangle that says "sigue".
Primero, haz clic en el círculo junto al lápiz que ves en la pantalla. Luego haz clic en el rectángulo verde que dice "sigue".

If the student does not answer within one minute or chooses the wrong answer and cannot pass this practice section, computerized testing is likely NOT appropriate for this

student. The MLS will end and the proctor will be notified that computerized testing is not appropriate for this student at this time.

The Spanish test measures reading skills from Kindergarten to grade 9. For Kindergarten and grade 1, students are tested on early literacy skills such as letter recognition, word reading, and simple sentence reading. For example, a student may hear a prompt and see choices as in the example below.

Which is the letter F?
¿Cuál de estas letras es la letra F?



Grades 2-9 follow the same format as the original MLS Reading Comprehension Test. Students see a reading passage and several multiple choice questions. Their performance on the questions determines whether they will move to a passage at a higher grade, stay at the same level or move to a passage at a lower grade.

The passages are culturally appropriate for Spanish speakers from a wide range of contexts and include various passage types, all of which will be of high interest for older students with different reading levels.

The MLS team has done an additional analysis of standards tested in countries throughout South and Central America and has found that in addition to the similarities among the standards in those countries, there are parallels with the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards, especially Reading standards 1-4. The test and the student performance reports have been updated to show how students perform on each type of question in NGLS reading standards 1-4, along with selected home country standards. Skills besides R1-4 that are emphasized in home country curricula are also described in the report. This nuanced information can be used as a starting point to understand students' skills and abilities and scaffold instruction.

As of May 2022, the only reading comprehension test that has these additional features is Spanish. Tests in other languages will be systematically updated and announced as they are completed.

In summary, the following differences exist between the Original MLS Reading Comprehension test and the Spanish Reading Comprehension Test with new features.

MLS READING COMPREHENSION TEST COMPARISON

Original MLS Reading Comprehension Test (15 Languages)

- No computer literacy check
- Testing range 3-9
- Student performance reports show information about performance on initial understanding questions and interpretation questions

MLS Reading Comprehension Test with New Features (Spanish)

- Computer literacy check
- Testing range K-9
- Reduced test taking time
- More detailed reports of home-language standards articulated through the NGLS

All MLS Reading Comprehension Tests

- Use culturally-appropriate reading passages which are authentic, original texts written by native speakers and education experts.
- Avoid region-specific vocabulary as to be appropriate for the particular regions that SIFE students are coming from.
- Semi-adaptive tests that result in a grade-level placement.

Original MLS Math Test

The MLS math test assesses grades 2-9. It is similar in style to the reading comprehension test. In the math test students will be tested on mathematical procedures, like addition, subtraction, multiplication, division; and also mathematical literacy, which includes word problems and problem solving. The student performance report shows how the student performs on procedural mathematics versus the mathematical literacy questions.

The way the math tests were developed is slightly different from how the reading comprehension tests were developed. While the reading comprehension tests were based on the **standards of the home country**, one set of math questions was created in alignment with **New York State standards** and trans-adapted into all the languages.

Trans-adaptation means that translators who speak the home language examine the test items for anything that makes the item inappropriate before translating it. For example, if an item is culturally inappropriate, hard to understand, or if the direct translation will distract from the point of the question, the item would be changed.

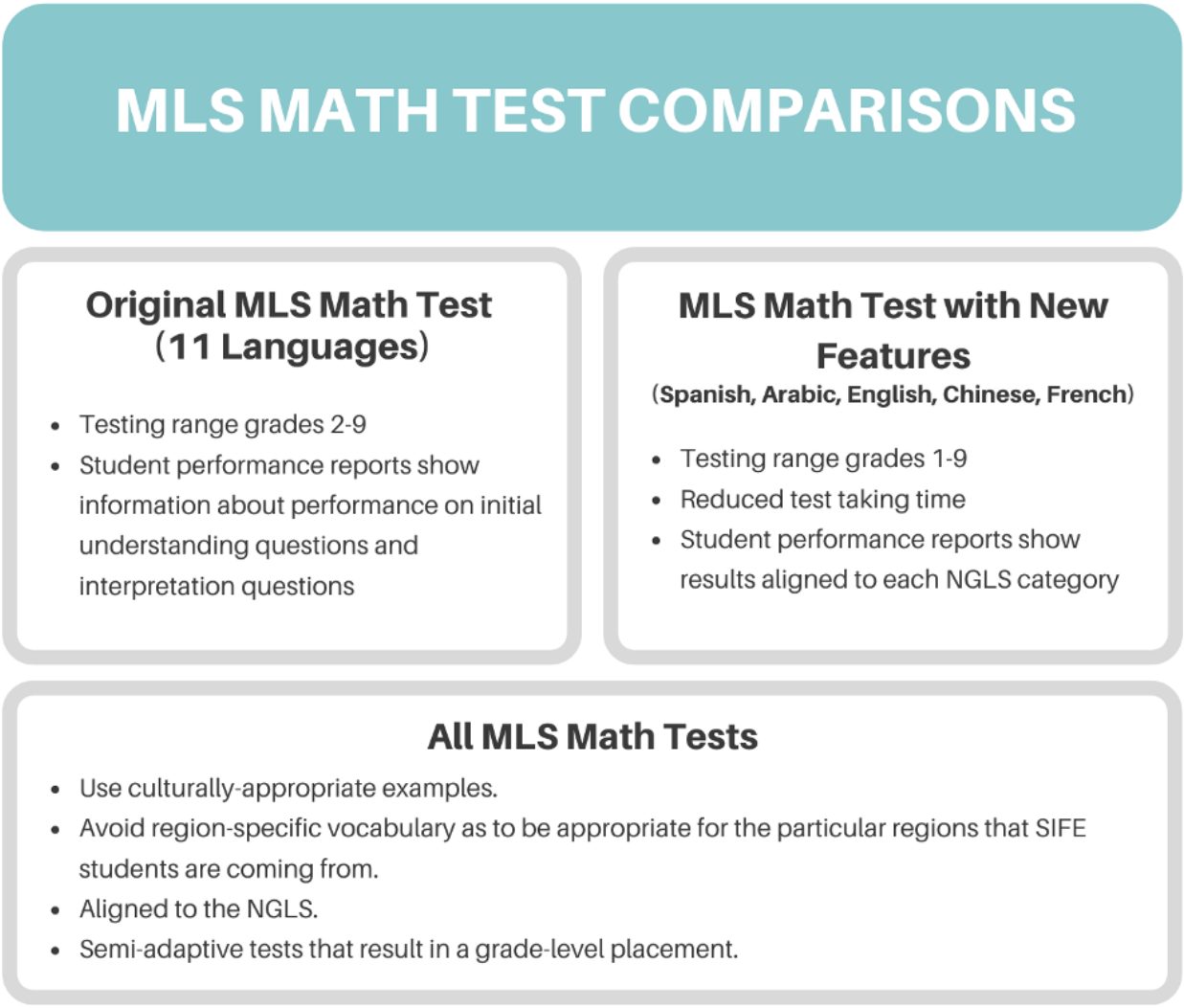
During each practice session, the student will first hear oral instructions in their home language on how to take the test and answer the questions. The audio plays, and the student has to listen to the full audio before moving on to the first question. The questions for the practice section have to be answered correctly in order for the test to advance. After the practice session, there is no more audio.

MLS Math Test with New Features: Spanish, Arabic, French, Chinese, English

In May 2022, the MLS Math test was updated to include additional features, including:

- Extended testing range Grades 1-9
- Reduced test taking time
- More detailed reports of performance by NGLS math

As of May 2022 this math test version is available in Spanish, Chinese, French, Arabic, and English. The other tests will be systematically updated and announced as they are completed. A summary chart is below.



Multi-column Tests

For some language versions of the MLS Math test number formats vary across regions that have the same standard language. One example is Arabic, shown below. Both number formats are shown in parallel on the MLS math test. The multiple columns provide options so that students can choose whichever system they're comfortable with. When one answer is highlighted, so is its corresponding equivalent.

MLS Vocabulary Test

Some countries that SIFE are coming from have a history of testing vocabulary separately from reading comprehension. So in Chinese, English, Hatian Creole Spanish, and Urdu, there is a separate vocabulary test. For all other languages, vocabulary is included in the Reading Comprehension test.

The vocabulary test measures students' knowledge of words in context, synonyms, compound words, and multiple meaning words.You will receive a teacher report which tells you how the student did on each specific skill type.

MLS Early Literacy Test

There is also an early literacy test which is only offered in English. If a student scores at a 3rd grade level or below on the English reading comprehension test, you may want to administer the early literacy test, which will provide more details on the skills students have below the 3rd grade level.

The early literacy test is designed for students who have had limited exposure to written texts, and provides teachers with information about their students' foundational literacy skills. The early literacy test is not a placement test and is not semi-adaptive. The student will take the entire test, regardless of their performance. Although this test does not provide a grade level like the reading comprehension and math tests do, it does indicate proficiency in specific skills. We have included this test in English in case proctors are interested to see whether students have early reading skills in English if they indicate basic decoding knowledge in the SIFE Oral Interview.

A note about the English tests

The purpose of the MLS is to evaluate literacy in the **home language** and to help determine SIFE status. The English version is available to see whether a student already has reading and math skills in English. Some students have had English instruction in the home country. Other students are exposed to English-medium curricular materials even though verbal instruction is in the home language. If the student has indicated familiarity with written English texts in the SIFE Oral Interview, the MLS English version may be administered to the student, in addition to the home language MLS. The teacher report generated from the English version helps teachers select the appropriate grade level English materials for the student. Please note that the English version should NOT be used for SIFE determination purposes.

Getting Set Up

Using the MLS Site

To begin using the MLS, open your internet browser. You can use Firefox, Chrome, Safari, or Microsoft Edge.

The MLS can be accessed on a desktop, laptop, or tablet. Type **mls.slalab.org** into the address bar of your browser. You will see the homepage.

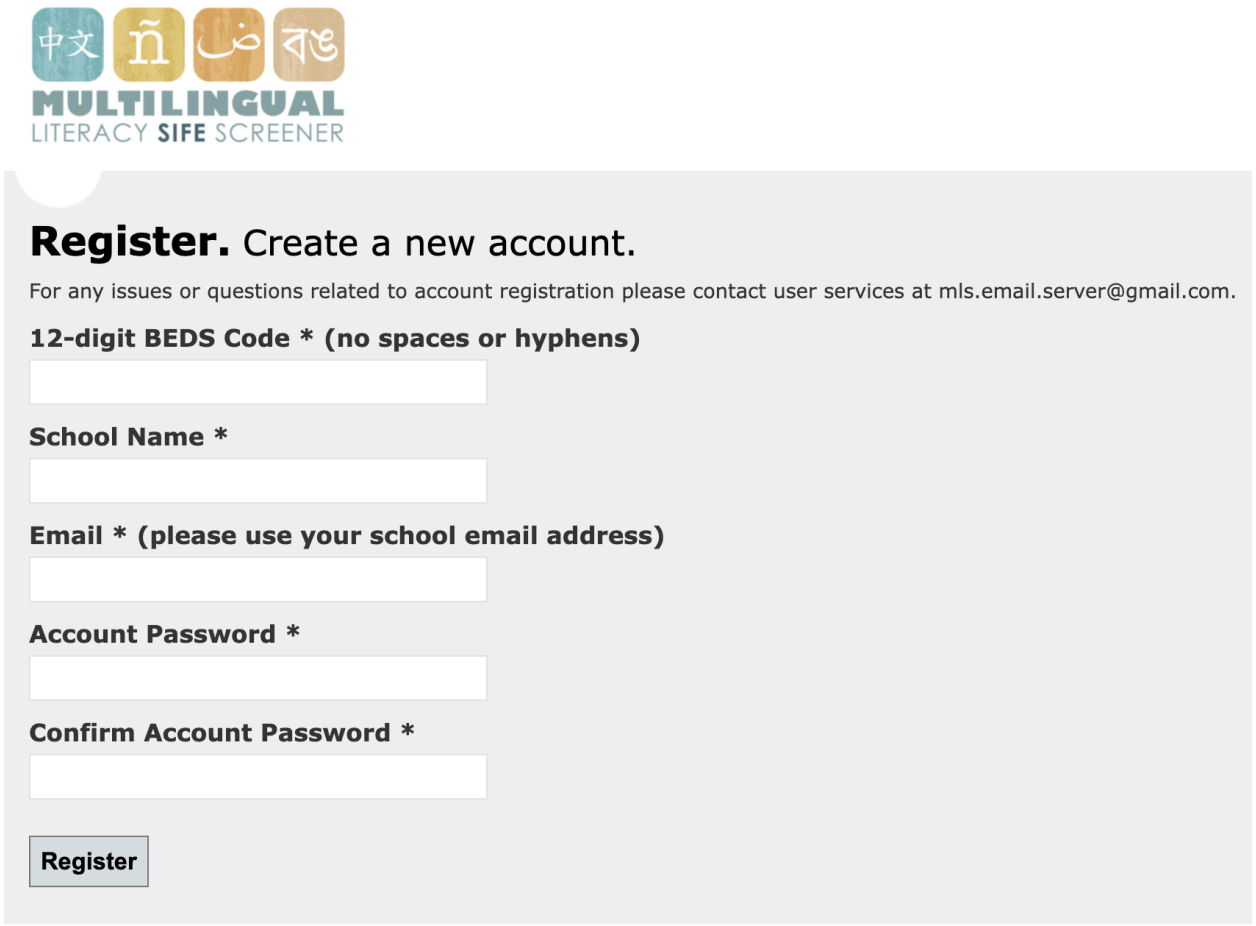
Apply for an Account

To begin, click the “Apply for an account” link. This will take you to the registration page. One single set of credentials can be claimed for each school site and for each district office.

You will need:

- **Your district or school’s BEDS code**. (This will be your account username.)
- **A password of your own creation** (this will be used by all educators at your school or district site).
- **Your school email address.**

After filling in all the fields with the appropriate information, click **Register**. Most accounts are approved within one business day. In some exceptional situations, requests may take longer to process.



You will receive an email confirming the school site BEDS code (your MLS username). Please note there will only be one set of credentials per school, and as well as a single district credential.

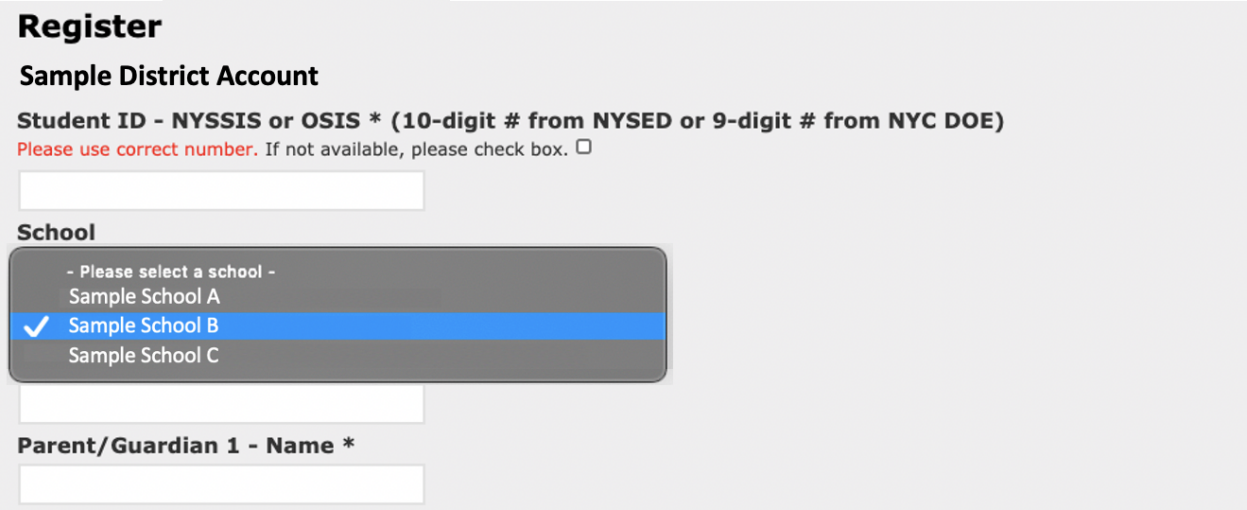
Please note that the 12-digit BEDS will be the username for MLS test administration. If you do not know your school's BEDS code, please contact a school administrator or OBEWL (obewl@nysed.gov). You can also find your school's BEDS code at https://data.nysed.gov/.

To **reset your password**, visit: mls.slalab.org/Account/ForgotAdminPassword. Enter your school or district's 12-digit BEDS code and the MLS team will contact the email associated with the account.

If you need to update the email associated with your account, contact our User Support Specialist at mls.email.server@gmail.com.

District Administration

A school district can create an account to access district-wide information, register students and administer tests. If the MLS is administered with a district-level account, the proctor is required to indicate the student's school assignment. If you would like more information about district accounts, contact our User Support Specialist at mls.email.server@gmail.com.



Student Registration

Before you can administer the MLS you must register each student. We recommend registering students before they are ready to take the MLS. This will allow test administration to proceed more quickly.

How to Register a Student

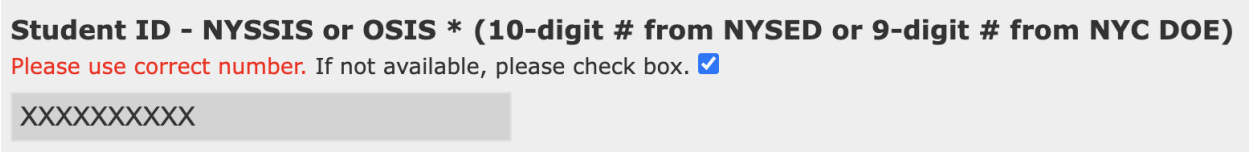
When you click **Student Registration** from the main menu, you will be prompted to enter your BEDS code and password, and then you'll be taken to the page to enter the student information. The list of information required is below. You can download this list as a worksheet at https://mls.slalab.org/MLS_Checklist_and_worksheet.pdf.

- Student NYSSIS ID or OSIS number
- Student first and last name
- A guardian's name and address
- Student date of birth
- What is the last grade the student attended?
- What grade will the student be placed in at your school?
- Student ID - Local (optional)
- Student's home language (Language student speaks in the home)
- Language of textbooks in home country
- Date of entry into NY state school system
- Has the Oral Interview Questionnaire been administered to this student?
- According to the SIFE Questionnaire, does the student have a gap of two or more years below grade level in literacy in their home language and/or two or more years below grade level in Math prior to arrival in the United States?
- Why are you administering this test (SIFE Determination or General Literacy Evaluation)?

First, you need to enter the student's **NYSSIS** or **OSIS** number. The NYSSIS Number is the New York State Student Identification System (NYSSIS) number. MLS proctors can get that number from your principal or the district administrator. Please contact the district office in advance to get the NYSSIS number. Nonpublic, charter and other schools should contact their CEO's Office. As of 2020, New York City schools can use the Office of Student Information Systems or OSIS number.

NYSSIS and OSIS numbers are numerical strings. They do not have strings of 0000 or 1111 in the front. If the student number you have available is shorter than 10 digits (NYSSIS) or 9 digits (OSIS), or if it starts with a string of 1s or 0s, that is not an official NYSSIS or OSIS number.

If the NYSSIS or OSIS number is not available at the time you administer the MLS, you can check the box you see in the screenshot below. This will enter a series of Xs for you. NYSED requires a NYSSIS or OSIS number for each student. If you do check the box, you will be reminded via email on the first and 15th of each month to enter the correct NYSSIS or OSIS number.



After filling in all of the fields click **‘create’** and your student is registered. Once a student is registered, their name will appear in the drop-down menu on each test administration page.

Registering Students from District Accounts

If you are administering the MLS for multiple schools in your district, you can use your district BEDS code. This will allow you to administer the MLS to students at different schools without managing multiple MLS accounts.

While registering students on a district account, users are asked to indicate each student’s school using a dropdown menu. If the school placement is not decided until after MLS administration, you can keep the default option ”please select a school”.

When a student has left a school district, district administrators can update their school designation to ‘other’ and note ‘left district.’

Updating Student Information

Quick tip:
To edit student information at any time, visit: mls.slalab.org/Student

Sometimes, it is not possible to enter each student's NYSSIS number before the student takes the MLS. If key student information is missing, you will receive reminder emails on the first and 15th of each month to update the information. The emails will indicate which student records require updates to the NYSSIS numbers or SIFE Determination fields. For district accounts that use the MLS to place students in a school, students with unassigned school placement fields will also be part of the email.

What is Final SIFE Determination?

When registering a student, users will see they are unable to fill out the 'Final SIFE Determination' question. This is where users will input the final decision about whether students are SIFE or non-SIFE **after MLS administration**. The MLS does not automatically assign SIFE determination after testing, since it is only one data point in the process.

Update final SIFE status by entering the account login at: http://mls.slalab.org/Student. Click the 'Missing SIFE' bar to see the list of students missing their SIFE Determination information. Select the dropdown in the 'Final SIFE Determination' column, and update this to either 'SIFE' or 'Non-SIFE'. This will automatically save.

Final SIFE determination is not based entirely on an MLS score. Responses to the Home Language Questionnaire and the SIFE Oral Interview, as well as the Writing Screener and any other data points collected should be triangulated with MLS results to determine whether a student is SIFE. More information is available at www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/students-interruptedinconsistent-formal-education-sife (OBEWL's SIFE website). Users may also reach out to their regional RBERN or OBEWL@nysed.gov for support on best practices for identifying SIFE students.

MLS Administration

Setting Students up to Take the Test

To administer a test, make sure:

- A quiet room is available for testing

Computer Setup

- The computer or tablet must be connected to the internet
- Only one MLS test should be open on a given device at a time. Do not have multiple test tabs open.

The student will need:

- Earphones to listen to the instructions and audio prompts
- Blank paper (scrap paper) and a pencil for the math portion (no calculator)
- Allocate 90 minutes to take the test whenever possible

Please ensure that students are in a quiet room with no distractions to complete the test. It may be helpful to place a “Testing in Progress: Do Not Disturb” sign on the door of the testing room. This is an untimed test, so please give students as much time as they need to complete the test. The test is adaptive, meaning students see different questions depending on their level. Sometimes students will complete a test within 30 minutes, and other times students may need more than one hour to take the test. Students may take a break during the test. Results are most accurate if students can complete the test within one school day. If the student cannot complete the test in a single school day you may close the test and resume it at a later time. Partial results are not available for students who do not complete the test.

The MLS is designed to work on both Windows and Mac operating systems. Instructions for the exam are given verbally, so ensure that there are headphones available for each student and that students can control the volume on their computer. If there is an interruption, such as a fire alarm, students may close the MLS and log back in to resume their test.

Because of the MLS format, it is important to determine whether the student has adequate keyboard skills to take the MLS (e.g. clicking and scrolling). Some newcomer students may come from refugee camps or have had limited access to digital technologies (e.g. smartphones, computers, and internet access). The qualified

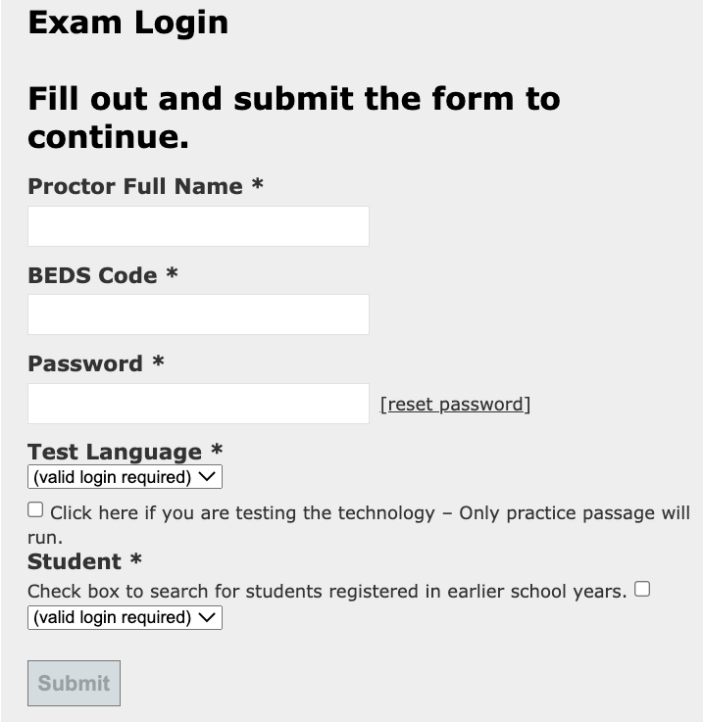
personnel will first need to assess if an online exam is appropriate for the student, or if the student will require some computer skills training prior to starting the exam. The proctor should observe the student to ensure that the student understands how to use a computer. The updated Reading Comprehension test includes a minimal computer literacy check at the beginning. If students are unable to proceed past this section, computerized testing is not a good option for that student at that time. Some students who struggle with a mouse or trackpad may be able to use a touch screen device if one is available. The MLS works on tablets and iPads.

What Test Comes First?

The Reading Comprehension test should be administered first, followed by the Math test. The Vocabulary test may be administered at the proctor's discretion, in the following available languages: Chinese, English, Haitian Creole, Spanish, and Urdu.

How to Administer a Test

Once the student is registered a proctor can administer the test. Begin from the homepage and select the test type. This brings users to the test administration screen.



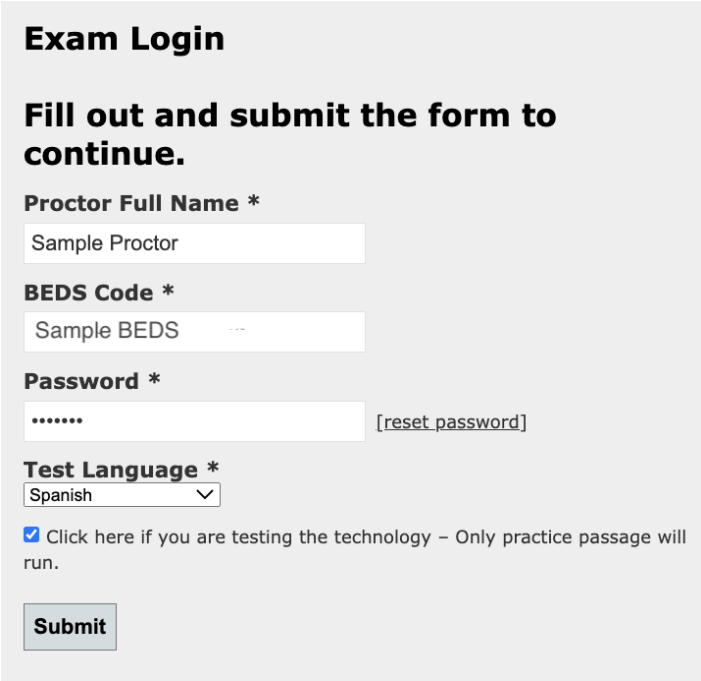
Here, input the proctor's name, the school BEDS code and account password. Please note that users can't choose the test language unless your BEDS code and password

are correct. Last, choose the name of the student from the dropdown menu. The menu will have all the students registered in the current academic year. To access students registered on the MLS website in previous academic years, click the box to search for the student. Click “submit” to initiate the test.

Once the student is in front of the screen, make sure the student has their headphones on and click the play button for the audio to begin. The student will hear the test instructions, then the test will begin. The practice section will also play aloud in the test language and prompt the student to answer the practice questions and move forward to the test questions. Audio prompts are also included in kindergarten and grade one content. After the grade one level, there is no other audio in the test.

Technology Check

Proctors can test the MLS technology on their devices. On the test login page, select the box next to ‘Click here if you are testing the technology - Only practice passage will run.’ This will allow you to make sure the sound and visuals work by initiating the welcome message and practice passage. After the practice passage, the test will end. This will not generate a student report.

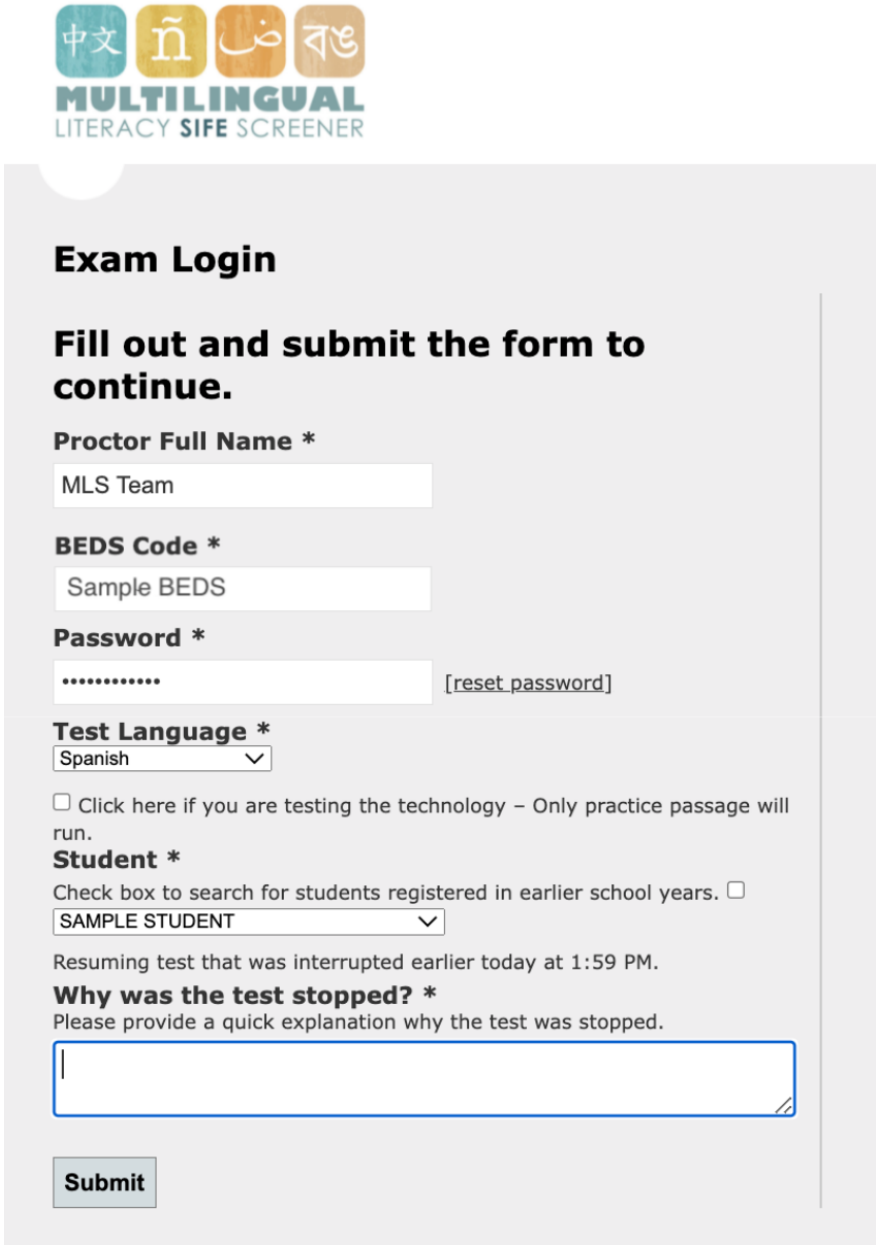


Resuming a test

The MLS is intended to be completed in one sitting. Sometimes the test can be interrupted if: the internet disconnects, computers malfunction, or for fire drills or other

school-wide emergencies. Students may be unable to continue and need to resume on another school day. Quitting the browser or closing the test tab will stop the test. A student may resume a test within two weeks of test initiation, by following the same process as the initial administration of the test.

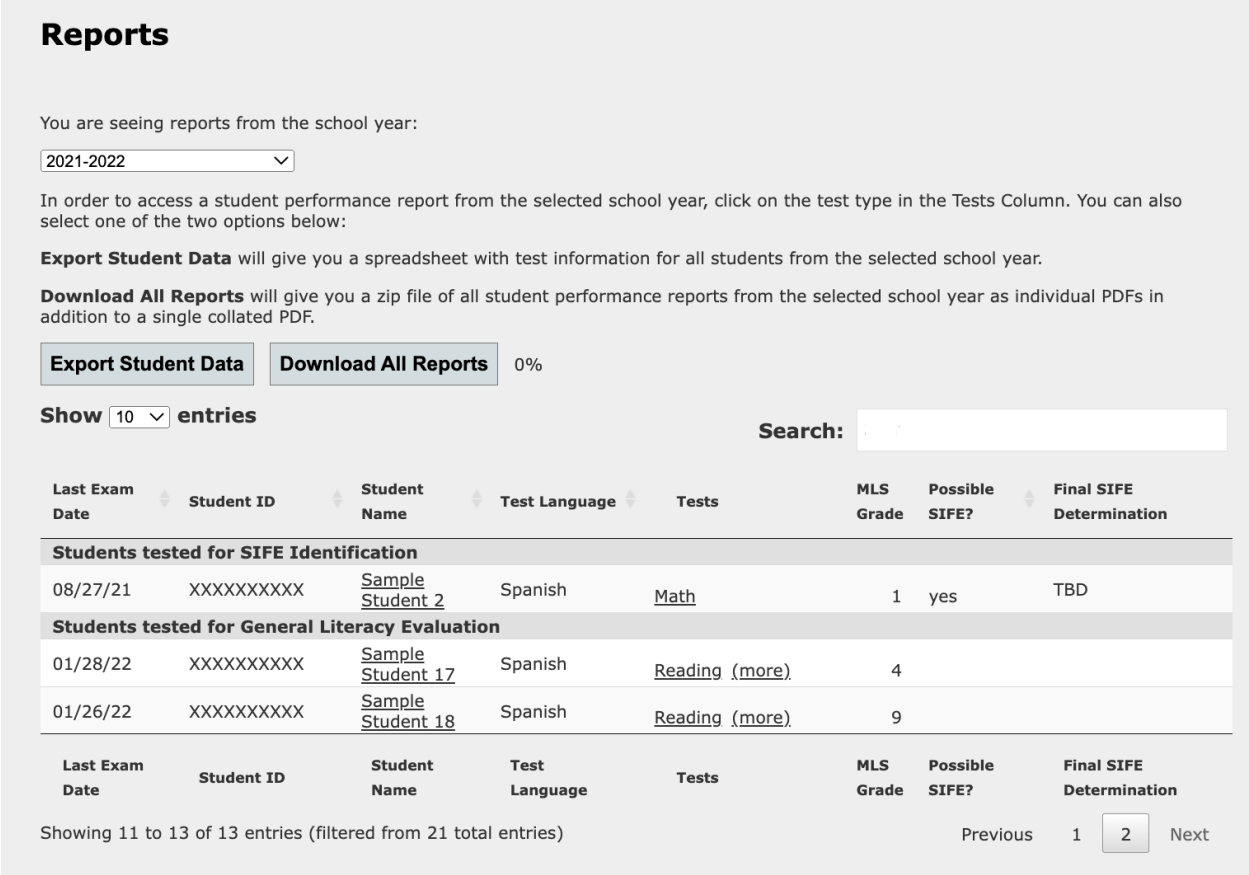
If the test is interrupted before the student completes the practice section, the student will start again from the beginning. If a student receives ‘NA’ as a placement by not passing the computer literacy section, but later improves their computer skills, a proctor may choose to retest the student at a later date.



Student Performance Reports

Accessing Student Performance Reports

After a student has taken the test and results have been saved, proctors may view the student performance report. Select ‘Access student performance reports’ from the home screen and enter the BEDS code and password. Users will see the following screen:



Reports

You are seeing reports from the school year:

2021-2022

In order to access a student performance report from the selected school year, click on the test type in the Tests Column. You can also select one of the two options below:

Export Student Data will give you a spreadsheet with test information for all students from the selected school year.

Download All Reports will give you a zip file of all student performance reports from the selected school year as individual PDFs in addition to a single collated PDF.

Export Student Data | **Download All Reports** | 0%

Show 10 **entries** **Search:**

Last Exam Date	Student ID	Student Name	Test Language	Tests	MLS Grade	Possible SIFE?	Final SIFE Determination
Students tested for SIFE Identification							
08/27/21	XXXXXXXXXX	Sample Student 2	Spanish	Math	1	yes	TBD
Students tested for General Literacy Evaluation							
01/28/22	XXXXXXXXXX	Sample Student 17	Spanish	Reading (more)	4		
01/26/22	XXXXXXXXXX	Sample Student 18	Spanish	Reading (more)	9		

Last Exam Date	Student ID	Student Name	Test Language	Tests	MLS Grade	Possible SIFE?	Final SIFE Determination

Showing 11 to 13 of 13 entries (filtered from 21 total entries) Previous 1 2 Next

To download a student performance report, select the underlined test type (ie. Math, Reading) in the student’s row. The report pdf will automatically download to the computer. If the student has taken a test multiple times, users can select ‘more’ to see the multiple test dates listed. Select the underlined test date and the report will download.

On the far right, there is a column called “possible SIFE”. Users will see “yes” if the student’s MLS score is two or more years below the grade that would be expected based on the student’s age. The Final SIFE Determination is inputted by the proctor after the MLS has been administered and the school or district decides whether the

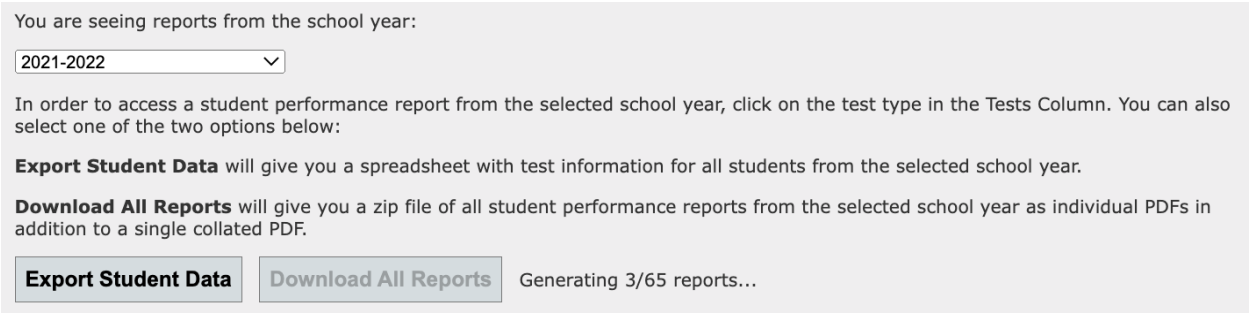
student is SIFE or not SIFE. See the *What is Final SIFE Determination?* section above for more details about SIFE determination.

Although the MLS was created for the purpose of identifying SIFE, it may be administered to students for general literacy evaluation purposes, at the school or district's discretion. The test reason prompt is on the student registration page. Students who are not potential SIFE will not get a possible SIFE result, and will not have a final SIFE determination status, since the MLS is not a SIFE identification tool for these students.

Last Exam Date	Student ID	Student Name	Test Language	Tests	MLS Grade	Possible SIFE?	Final SIFE Determination
Students tested for SIFE Identification							
08/27/21	XXXXXXXXXX	Sample Student 2	Spanish	Math	1	yes	TBD
Students tested for General Literacy Evaluation							
01/28/22	XXXXXXXXXX	Sample Student 17	Spanish	Reading (more)	4		

Note that the website allows an option to filter results. Users can sort the report page by student name, test language, or administration date. Students tested for SIFE Identification and General Literacy appear in separate sections.

The results on the report page are set to the current school year by default. To see reports from a previous school year (if available), select the year from the dropdown menu on the top of the screen.



Users may access the Student Performance Reports by downloading them on this page. Click on the test type in the Tests Column to download individual reports. Users can also select one of these two options to download more general information.

Select **Export Student Data** to download a spreadsheet with test information for all students from the selected school year. The **Download All Reports** button provides a

zip file of all student performance reports from the selected school year as individual PDFS and as one collated PDF.

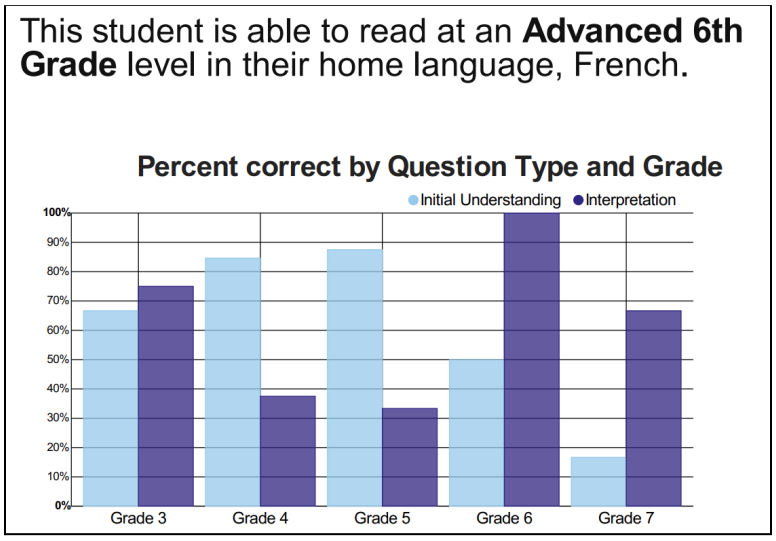
Clicking either of these buttons, or clicking a test name in the table of students on the report page will initiate report downloads. Users can track the download progress next to the ‘Download All Reports’ button.

Reports for students at a given school will appear in the school account even if the MLS tests were administered using a district MLS account. While using a district account, users can see the reports for all students in the district.

Anatomy of a Student Performance Report

The Student Performance Report gives information about a student’s home language skills and abilities. These reports can inform instruction and help teachers plan appropriate scaffolding. It’s important to make sure the teachers of SIFE students have access to these reports, even if they are not the person administering the MLS.

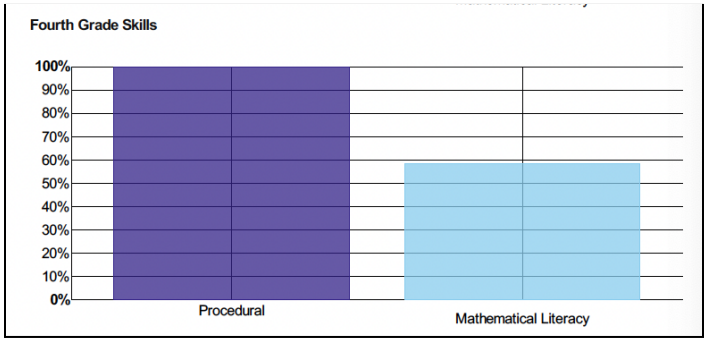
For the original MLS tests, the report states the particular grade level that the student scored, and the general skills and abilities that students are expected to have at this grade level. The report also includes a bar graph that shows the student’s percentage correct of questions, organized by grade level. This bar chart is tailored to each student based on what they answered, while any prose in the reports applies to students at that grade level more generally.



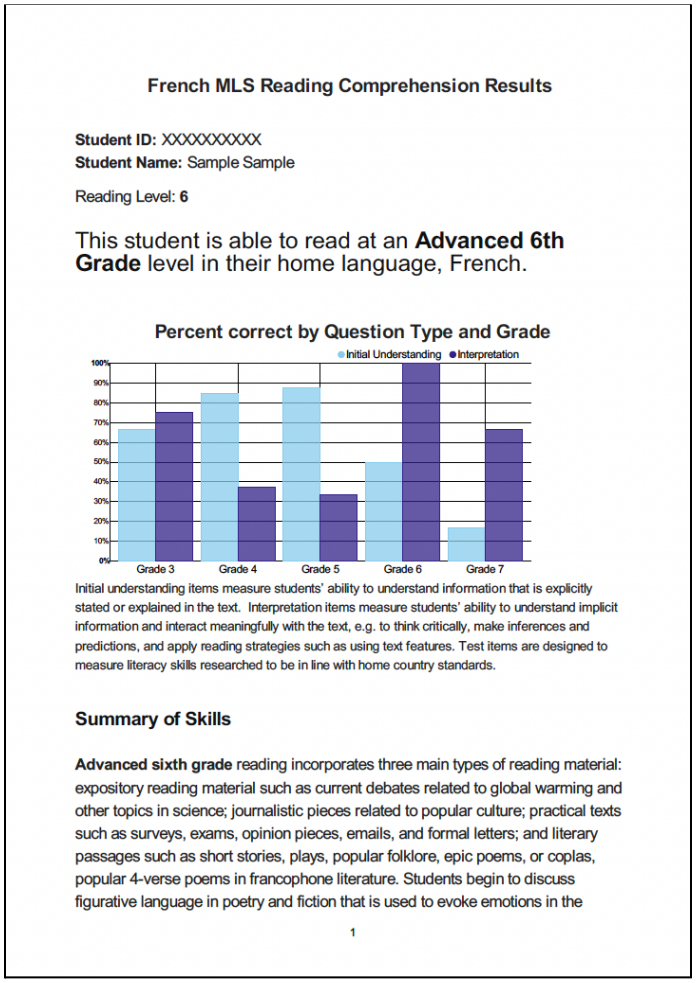
Reading Comprehension tests are subdivided into *Initial Understanding* and *Interpretation* questions. The bar graph shows the percentage correct on each type of question. The question types are not balanced and appear in different ratios according to grade and text. In this sample, the light blue bar on the left side of that chart shows the percentage of initial

understanding questions answered correctly, and the purple bar on the right shows the percentage of interpretation questions answered correctly.

Math tests are subdivided into *procedural* or *mathematical literacy* questions. Again, the bar graph shows the percentage correct on each type of question. In this sample, the purple bar on the left side of that chart shows the percentage of procedural questions answered correctly, and the light blue bar on the right shows the percentage of interpretation questions answered correctly.



Below is an example of a cover page for a reading comprehension report.



French MLS Reading Comprehension Results

Student ID: XXXXXXXXXX
Student Name: Sample Sample

Reading Level: **6**

This student is able to read at an **Advanced 6th Grade** level in their home language, French.

Percent correct by Question Type and Grade

Initial understanding items measure students' ability to understand information that is explicitly stated or explained in the text. Interpretation items measure students' ability to understand implicit information and interact meaningfully with the text, e.g. to think critically, make inferences and predictions, and apply reading strategies such as using text features. Test items are designed to measure literacy skills researched to be in line with home country standards.

Summary of Skills

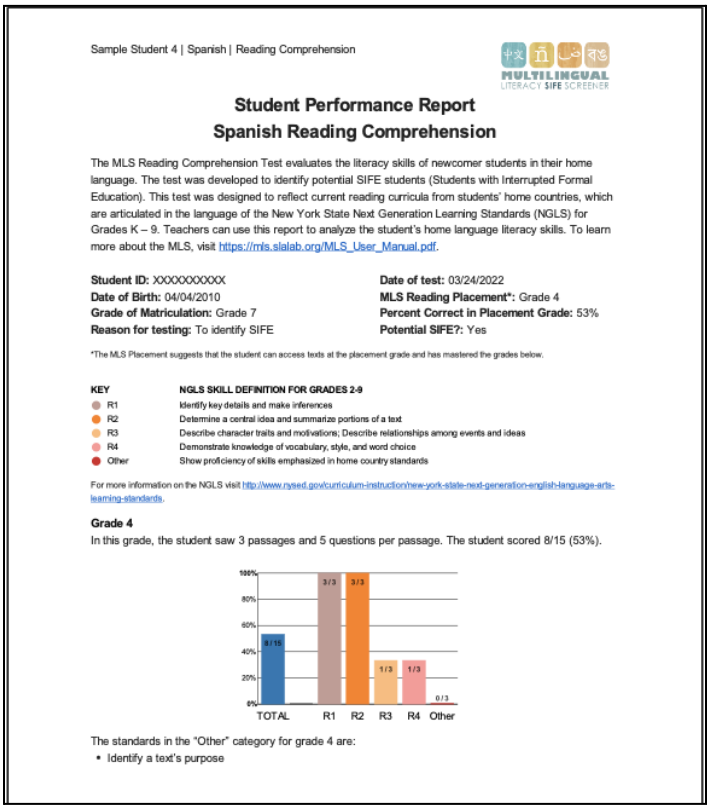
Advanced sixth grade reading incorporates three main types of reading material: expository reading material such as current debates related to global warming and other topics in science; journalistic pieces related to popular culture; practical texts such as surveys, exams, opinion pieces, emails, and formal letters; and literary passages such as short stories, plays, popular folklore, epic poems, or coplas, popular 4-verse poems in francophone literature. Students begin to discuss figurative language in poetry and fiction that is used to evoke emotions in the

1

2022 Updated Reports

In May 2022, the MLS Student Performance Reports were updated.

There are different Student Performance Reports for the updated tests with new features, including the Spanish Reading Comprehension test and Math test in Spanish, English, Arabic, French, and Chinese. These Student Performance Reports have a different layout and include more nuanced information about student performance by question type. Here is an example of a Spanish Reading Comprehension Report.



Sample Student 4 | Spanish | Reading Comprehension

MULTILINGUAL LITERACY SIFE SCREENER

Student Performance Report
Spanish Reading Comprehension

The MLS Reading Comprehension Test evaluates the literacy skills of newcomer students in their home language. The test was developed to identify potential SIFE students (Students with Interrupted Formal Education). This test was designed to reflect current reading curricula from students' home countries, which are articulated in the language of the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (NGLS) for Grades K – 9. Teachers can use this report to analyze the student's home language literacy skills. To learn more about the MLS, visit https://mls.slalab.org/MLS_User_Manual.pdf.

Student ID: XXXXXXXXXX
Date of Birth: 04/04/2010
Grade of Matriculation: Grade 7
Reason for testing: To identify SIFE
Date of test: 03/24/2022
MLS Reading Placement*: Grade 4
Percent Correct in Placement Grade: 53%
Potential SIFE?: Yes

*The MLS Placement suggests that the student can access texts at the placement grade and has mastered the grades below.

KEY	NGLS SKILL DEFINITION FOR GRADES 2-9
R1	Identify key details and make inferences
R2	Determine a central idea and summarize portions of a text
R3	Describe character traits and motivations; Describe relationships among events and ideas
R4	Demonstrate knowledge of vocabulary, style, and word choice
Other	Show proficiency of skills emphasized in home country standards

For more information on the NGLS visit http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/new-york-state-next-generation-english-language-arts-learning-standards.

Grade 4
In this grade, the student saw 3 passages and 5 questions per passage. The student scored 8/15 (53%).

The standards in the "Other" category for grade 4 are:
- Identify a text's purpose

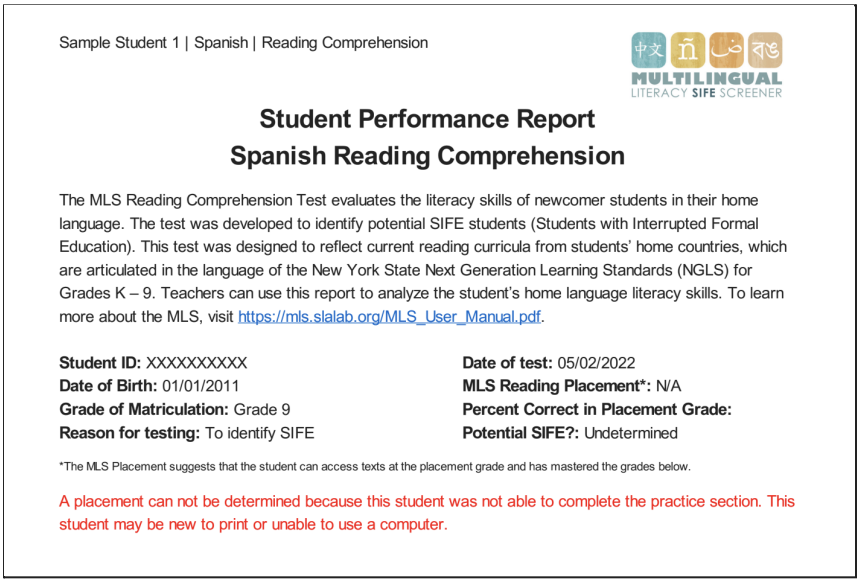
The reports begin with a short narrative paragraph, a link to this manual and expanded student biographical information. The header now includes the student's name, the test language, and the test type.

Users will see the 'MLS Placement Grade'. This grade signifies that the student has mastered the grades below that level and is ready for instruction at the grade placement level.

Below this is a key of New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (NGLS). A set of graphs separated by grade level show how students performed in each category

they saw questions for. The algorithm has been updated for students to proceed more quickly through the test, so broken down data will likely not be available for all grades.

If a student does not pass the computer literacy portion of the Spanish Reading Comprehension test, they will receive a result of N/A, as shown below. This likely means that the student does not know how to use a computer or refuses to participate in the test. If a student receives a report of N/A on their first day at school and the test administrators think a student received this score in error, the student may be retested.



Sample Student 1 | Spanish | Reading Comprehension

MULTILINGUAL LITERACY SIFE SCREENER

Student Performance Report
Spanish Reading Comprehension

The MLS Reading Comprehension Test evaluates the literacy skills of newcomer students in their home language. The test was developed to identify potential SIFE students (Students with Interrupted Formal Education). This test was designed to reflect current reading curricula from students' home countries, which are articulated in the language of the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (NGLS) for Grades K – 9. Teachers can use this report to analyze the student's home language literacy skills. To learn more about the MLS, visit https://mls.slalab.org/MLS_User_Manual.pdf.

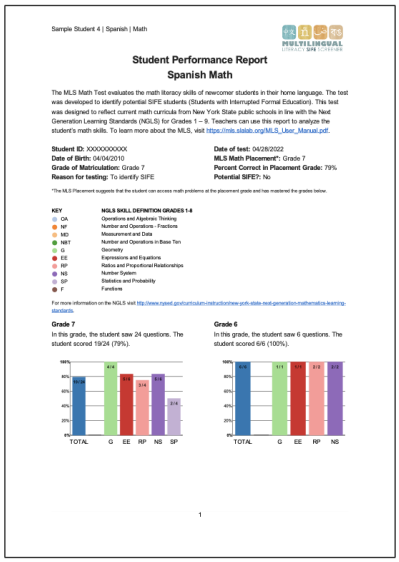
Student ID: XXXXXXXXXX
Date of Birth: 01/01/2011
Grade of Matriculation: Grade 9
Reason for testing: To identify SIFE

Date of test: 05/02/2022
MLS Reading Placement*: N/A
Percent Correct in Placement Grade:
Potential SIFE?: Undetermined

*The MLS Placement suggests that the student can access texts at the placement grade and has mastered the grades below.

A placement can not be determined because this student was not able to complete the practice section. This student may be new to print or unable to use a computer.

Here is a sample math test report.



Sample Student 4 | Spanish | Math

Student Performance Report
Spanish Math

The MLS Math Test evaluates the math literacy skills of newcomer students in their home language. The test was developed to identify potential SIFE students (Students with Interrupted Formal Education). This test was designed to reflect current math curricula from New York State public schools in line with the Next Generation Learning Standards (NGLS) for Grades 1 – 9. Teachers can use this report to analyze the student's math skills. To learn more about the MLS, visit https://mls.slalab.org/MLS_User_Manual.pdf.

Student ID: XXXXXXXXX
Date of Birth: 04/04/2010
Grade of Matriculation: Grade 7
Reason for testing: To identify SIFE

Date of test: 04/28/2022
MLS Math Placement*: Grade 7
Percent Correct in Placement Grade: 79%
Potential SIFE?: No

*The MLS Placement suggests that the student can access math problems at the placement grade and has mastered the grades below.

KEY
OA Operations and Algebraic Thinking
NF Number and Operations - Fractions
MD Measurement and Data
NBT Number and Operations in Base Ten
G Geometry
EE Expressions and Equations
RP Ratios and Proportional Relationships
NS Number System
SP Statistics and Probability
F Functions

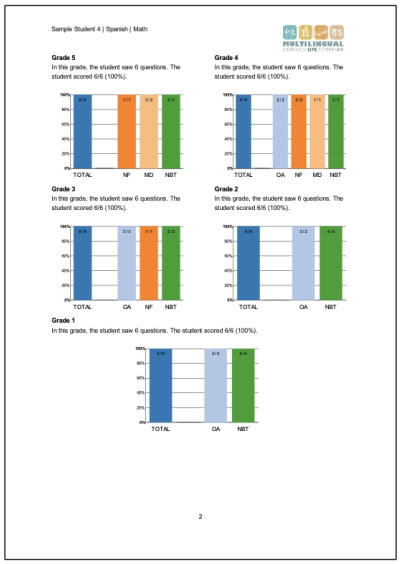
NGLS SKILL DEFINITION GRADES 1-8

For more information on the NGLS visit http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/new-york-state-next-generation-mathematics-learning-standards.

Grade 7
In this grade, the student saw 24 questions. The student scored 19/24 (79%).

Grade 6
In this grade, the student saw 6 questions. The student scored 6/6 (100%).

1



Sample Student 4 | Spanish | Math

Grade 5
In this grade, the student saw 6 questions. The student scored 6/6 (100%).

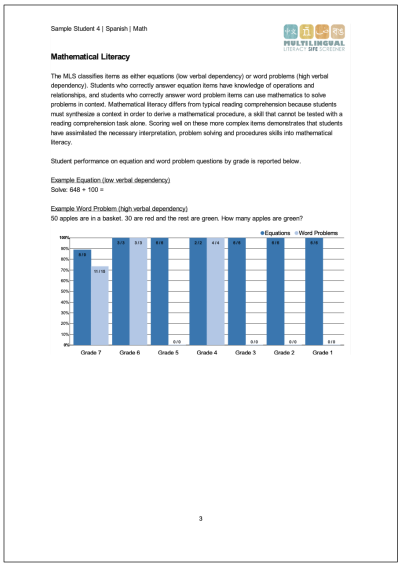
Grade 4
In this grade, the student saw 6 questions. The student scored 6/6 (100%).

Grade 3
In this grade, the student saw 6 questions. The student scored 6/6 (100%).

Grade 2
In this grade, the student saw 6 questions. The student scored 6/6 (100%).

Grade 1
In this grade, the student saw 6 questions. The student scored 6/6 (100%).

2



Sample Student 4 | Spanish | Math

Mathematical Literacy

The MLS classifies items as either equations (low verbal dependency) or word problems (high verbal dependency). Students who correctly answer equation items have knowledge of operations and relationships, and students who correctly answer word problem items can use mathematics to solve problems in context. Mathematical literacy differs from typical reading comprehension because students must synthesize a context in order to derive a mathematical procedure, a skill that cannot be tested with a reading comprehension task alone. Scoring well on these more complex items demonstrates that students have assimilated the necessary interpretation, problem solving and procedures skills into mathematical literacy.

Student performance on equation and word problem questions by grade is reported below.

Example Equation (low verbal dependency)
Solve: 648 ÷ 100 =

Example Word Problem (high verbal dependency)
50 apples are in a basket. 30 are red and the rest are green. How many apples are green?

Equations Word Problems

Grade 7 Grade 6 Grade 5 Grade 4 Grade 3 Grade 2 Grade 1

3

Similar to the Reading Comprehension Report, users will see the ‘MLS Placement Grade’, which signifies that the student has mastered the grades below that level and is ready for instruction at the grade placement level.

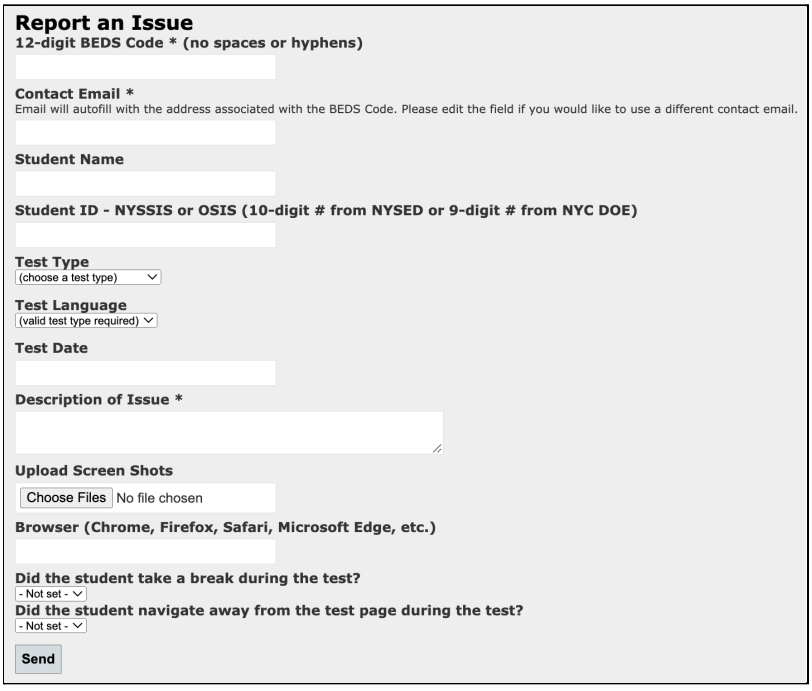
Below this is a key of New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (NGLS) for mathematics. A set of graphs separated by grade level show how students performed in each category they saw questions for. The above math report shows data for each grade the student saw. The last page of the Math report shows how students performed on equation problems and word problems, separated by category.

Technical Information

Report an Issue

If users have any technology issues, there is a straightforward process to contact the MLS user support team. Click “Report an issue” on the homepage to access a form that will prompt for all the information required to provide assistance.

Here is what the form looks like. Users are prompted to enter a description of the issue, as well as the browser in use. Screenshots may be uploaded to the form and are recommended for faster troubleshooting.



For general questions, email MLS.email.server@gmail.com.

Resources

MLS Resources

For more information on how to get started, including the MLS Quick Sheet, Checklist and Worksheet, go to mls.slalab.org. You can find your school's BEDS code at https://data.nysed.gov/.

MLS Quicksheet: https://mls.slalab.org/MLS_Quicksheet.pdf
MLS Checklist + Worksheet: https://mls.slalab.org/MLS_Checklist_and_worksheet.pdf

For more information about SIFE & the MLS watch:

- 2022 Introduction to the MLS: https://vimeo.com/411076664
- 2022 Updates to the MLS Webinar: https://vimeo.com/698172073
- 2021 Updates to the MLS Webinar: https://vimeo.com/506187912

SIFE Support Resources

NYSED SIFE Resources
http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/students-interruptedinconsistent-formal-education-sife

NYSED Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages
www.nysed.gov/program-offices/office-bilingual-education-and-world-languages-obewl
Email: OBEWL@NYSED.GOV

SIFE Screening, Identification, and Placement Flowchart
http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/bilingual-ed/sifeflowchart9_20_16.pdf

Bridges to Academic Success. (2019). SIFE Manual.
https://bridges-sifeproject.com/Prof_Dev/Publications/SIFE%20Manual.pdf

NYSED Engage NY www.engageny.org

Contact the ELL Parent Hotline at 1-800-469-8224 or nysparenthotline@nyu.edu

Find your Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBERNs) here:
http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/regional-supportrberns

New York State Education Department. (2015). CR Part 154 English as New Language (ENL) Units of Study and Staffing Requirements. The State Education Department, The University of the State of New York. Retrieved from http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/bilingual-ed/enl-k-8-units-of-studytable-5-6-15.pdf

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Klein, E., & Martohardjono, G. (2006). Understanding the student with interrupted formal education (SIFE): A study of SIFE skills, needs and achievement (Phase I). New York: New York City Department of Education.

Klein, E., & Martohardjono, G. (2009). Understanding the student with interrupted formal education (SIFE): A study of SIFE skills, needs and achievement (Phase II). New York: New York City Department of Education.

Martohardjono, G. and E. Klein. (2015). English language learners with low native language literacy: A profile and an intervention. In Santos, M.G. and A. Whiteside, eds., Low Educated Second Language and Literacy Acquisition: Proceedings of the Ninth Symposium. Lulu Publishing.

Curinga, R. and L. Garrison-Fletcher. (2015). The Importance of First-Language Evading Skills in English Reading Comprehension for Adolescent Newcomers. In Santos, M.G. and A. Whiteside, eds., Low Educated Second Language and Literacy Acquisition: Proceedings of the Ninth Symposium. Lulu Publishing.

Garrison, L., G. Martohardjono, and M. Chodorow. (2019). The Impact of Home Language Skills on L2 Reading Comprehension: A study of newcomer emergent bilinguals. International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.