



**MULTILINGUAL**  
LITERACY **SIFE** SCREENER

# User Manual



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### 1. Introduction to the MLS

The MLS is a multilingual test tool used to inform teachers and administrators of the home-language literacy skills their students bring with them when they begin schooling in New York State. The MLS was created by an expert team of educators, linguists, and researchers from the Second Language Acquisition Lab and The Research Institute for the Study of Language in Urban Society (RISLUS) at The Graduate Center, City University of New York in collaboration with the New York State Education Department.

The MLS is a semi-adaptive online test tool that reflects current literature-based curricula and didactic principles from students' home countries for grades 3 through 9. The MLS Math is an online test tool that reflects cultural and linguistic sensitivities for students from the target home countries while assessing New York State Common Core aligned mathematical skills in the home language. The MLS has four components: Early Literacy, Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Math. The Early Literacy module, which is an optional module, asks students to identify same and different sounds, syllables, and sound-to-symbol correspondences. Beyond the word level, it examines basic sentence comprehension. The Early Literacy module is available in English and Spanish. The Reading Comprehension module asks students to read passages of various types: literary, informational, functional, and persuasive, and answer both Initial Understanding and Interpretation questions. The text types differ by language. The Reading Comprehension module is available in the following languages: Arabic, Bangla, Burmese, Simplified Mandarin Chinese, English, French, Fulani, Haitian Creole, Maay Maay, Nepali, Russian, S'gaw Karen, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, and Urdu. The Vocabulary section, which is also an optional module, tests synonyms and students' knowledge of words in context. The Vocabulary module is available in Simplified Mandarin Chinese, English, Haitian Creole, Spanish and Urdu. In some languages the MLS Vocabulary section also includes compound words and multiple meaning words. In other languages, Vocabulary is embedded in the Reading Comprehension section. (Please see Section 8.B.2 for information on the Vocabulary module.) The Math module asks students to answer math questions of two types: procedural and mathematical literacy. The Math module is available in the following languages: Arabic, Bangla, Burmese, Simplified Mandarin Chinese, English, French, Fulani, Haitian Creole, Maay Maay, Nepali, Russian, S'gaw Karen, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, and Urdu.

Age- and culturally-appropriate reading passages are authentic, original texts written by native speakers and educational experts. Passages were created to avoid region-specific vocabulary. Text types and topics were selected according to popular home language literary traditions and genres familiar to newcomer students. Question types differ by language to match home-country testing conventions.

The dynamic MLS Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension modules begin with a practice section. Following this, scored questions begin at the advanced third grade level. The

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subsequent MLS passages and questions increase in grade and difficulty if they are answered correctly and decrease in grade and difficulty if they are answered incorrectly. The MLS Early Literacy sections begin with a practice session and a student sees every question in each section of the test tool. The MLS Math module also begins with a practice session, then scored questions begin at the third-grade level. The subsequent questions increase in grade and difficulty if they are answered correctly and decrease in grade and difficulty if they are answered incorrectly.

The MLS's Literacy Skills and Abilities Teacher Report is a detailed description of a student's skills and abilities in reading, vocabulary, and early literacy. The report also identifies grade level (grades 3 through 9) according to literacy skills and abilities standards of the home country. The MLS Math Report provides a detailed description of a student's skills and abilities in mathematics and identifies math skills and abilities by grade level (grades 2 through 9) according to the New York State Common Core Standards.

### 2. Population and Purpose

Newcomer English Language Learners (ELLs) in New York State are usually placed in a Bilingual Education program or in an English as a New Language (ENL) instructional program that draw on students' home language and content knowledge while building language and academic skills in English. These program models require a foundation in home-language literacy skills. Educators are able to facilitate learning in both the home language and in English by tapping into students' prior knowledge and existing home-language literacy skills.

Many immigrant students come from areas where access to education is limited due to war, political unrest, cultural customs, and other factors. This group is known as Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE). SIFE are characterized as reading two grades below their grade level in their home language. The MLS is a test tool to be used in conjunction with the SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire and the Writing Screener to determine if a newly-arrived English Language Learner should be designated as SIFE.

### 3. Before MLS Administration

#### 3a. Potential SIFE

If an identified ELL is potentially SIFE as determined by the Home Language Questionnaire, the Individual Interview and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL), the MLS should be administered to determine the student’s home language literacy skills. Because of the MLS’s 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. smart phones, 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.

#### 3b. Choosing MLS Language

Before administering the MLS, the qualified personnel that will be administering the exam should review the Home Language Questionnaire as well as the Individual Interview Screening and the language of prior schooling of the student in order to determine in which language the MLS should be administered.

#### 3c. Facilities Requirements

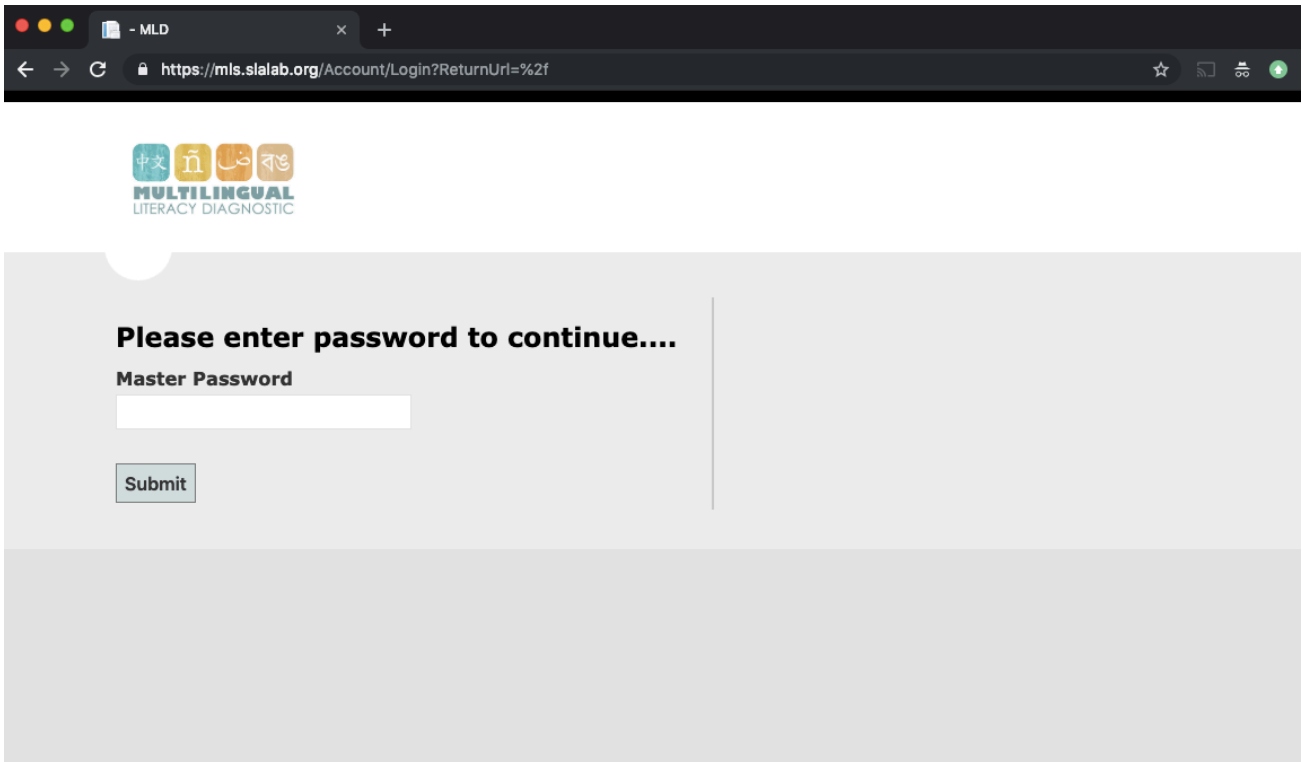
Please ensure that students are in a quiet room with no distractions to complete the test. It may be helpful to place a “Testing in Progress: Do Not Disturb” sign on the door of the testing room. This is an untimed test, so please give students as much time as they need to complete the test. Although the test is untimed, each module of the MLS may take up to 50 minutes, depending on the student’s home language proficiency. Students may take longer than one hour or take a break during the test. Students must complete the test within one school day. It is not possible to save progress and resume testing at a later time. Results are not available for students who do not complete the test.

#### 3d. Technology Requirements

The MLS is administered online using a computer with audio capabilities and with reliable and consistent internet access. The MLS is designed to work on both Windows and Mac operating systems with **Firefox or Chrome** internet browsers. **Do NOT use MICROSOFT INTERNET EXPLORER or SAFARI.** 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 leave the MLS open on the browser and return to the test later. The data will not be saved unless the test is completed, so do not close the browser on the MLS until you have confirmation that the data has been sent to the server. Students must not hit refresh or use the back button on the browser during the test. This will result in the loss of the student’s completed work.

## 4. General Login

To begin using the MLS, open the **Firefox or Chrome** internet browser. **Do NOT use MICROSOFT INTERNET EXPLORER or SAFARI!** Type [mls.slalab.org](https://mls.slalab.org) into the address bar of your browser. You will see the screen below which prompts you for a password to login. In the field under *Master Password* enter the master password **mlsnysed**, and then click the **Submit** button. There is no “forgot password” link on this page. See section 10 for more information on how to reset your password.



### 5. Homepage

Once you have logged in, the next screen is the homepage (shown below). From the homepage you can click on the following links (in bold):

- ***Apply for an account.*** Click this link the first time the MLS will be administered to create credentials. Each school site only has one set of credentials, namely:
  - *A login and password to administer a test.* The login is your school's **12-digit BEDS code**, and the password is created by qualified personnel that will administer the test. There is only one login and password per school.
- *It is important to apply for an account PRIOR to administering the tests. It is recommended that you apply for an account three days before the first time you plan to administer a test. Please see section 6 below on Applying for an Account.*

Once you have credentials, enter the MLS website again with the master password **mlsnysed**, and then do the following:

If you want to administer a math test, select ***Math.***

If you want to administer an additional optional early literacy test, select ***Early Literacy.***

If you want to administer an additional optional vocabulary test, select ***Vocabulary.***

If you want to administer a SIFE identification test, select ***Reading Comprehension.***

If you want to register a student's information, select ***Student Registration.***

If you want to view or print your student's results, select ***Student Reports.***





[Math](#)

[Early Literacy](#)

[Vocabulary](#)

[Reading Comprehension](#)

[Student Registration](#)

[Student Reports](#)

[Apply for an account](#)

## 6. Applying for an Account

To apply for an account and obtain credentials, click ***Apply for an Account*** at the bottom of the screen. After clicking on the link, you will see the *Registration* screen below. In order to register for an account and obtain credentials, fill in the following fields.

- ***School name:*** Enter the name of your school (e.g. P.S. 000 - The Barack H. Obama School for Government Studies).
- ***Email:*** Enter the official work or school email address that the school site MLS Administrator will use. Please use your official NY State email address. Credentials will be emailed to this address after submitting the registration form (Please apply for an account at least three days before you plan to administer a test).
- ***12-digit BEDS code:*** Enter your school's BEDS code. This will be the username for MLS test administration. If you do not know your school's BEDS code, please contact a school administrator or NYSED.



**Register.** Create a new account.

School Name

Email (please use your official NY State Education Department email address)

12-digit BEDS code (no spaces or hyphens)

Account Password

Confirm Account Password

Register

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- ***Account Password.*** Create and enter a password for your account. Keep this in a safe location, and keep in mind that only one set of credentials will be assigned per school so any Proctor administering an exam will need to use this password.
- ***Confirm Account Password.*** Re-enter the password for MLS Proctors. Make sure that it is the same as the above field.

After filling in all the fields with the appropriate information, click the ***Register*** button. Your registration request will be approved by the MLS Web Administrator within three (3) business days. 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.

### 7. Registering a Student

After your account is created but before administering an exam, you must register each student that will be taking any of the four exams. To register a student, click ***Student Registration*** on the homepage. Login using your school's BEDS code and the password you created. You will then be taken to the ***Create*** screen below, where you will fill in the following fields.

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- **Student ID:** Enter the student’s NY State student ID number. If you do not know their NYSSIS, check the box. Do **NOT** enter a fake ID for the student.
- **Student First Name:** Have the student enter their own first name(s) as listed on official school records. Note that students may have more than one first name (e.g. Maria Elena, Mary Sue). Be sure to enter all of the legal names of the student.
- **Student Last Name:** Have the student enter their own last name(s) as listed on official school records. Note that students may have more than one last name (e.g. Serrano Garcia, Barrera Tobón). Be sure to enter all of the legal names of the student.
- **Parent/Guardian Name:** Enter the full legal name of the guardian(s) on record for the student.
- **Parent/Guardian Address:** Enter the address of record for the student’s guardian(s).
- **Student Date of Birth:** Have the student enter their legal date of birth, following the correct formatting provided.
- **Student ID - Local:** Enter the student’s ID for your school. This information is not mandatory but may help your school’s records in locating exam results.
- **Home Language:** Enter the home language of the student. This should be the same language in which the exam is being administered. If the student has more than one home language, enter each home language separated by commas and a space. You can report the home language(s) exactly as indicated by the student. Often the same language will be named differently depending on the community and, conversely, different languages will be named the same.
- **School District Name:** Enter the name of the school district in which the student is currently enrolled.
- **Current Grade:** Enter the grade in which the student is currently enrolled.

**Create**

Student ID - NYSSIS \* (10-digit # from NYSED)  
Please use correct number. If not available, please check box.

School

Student First Name \*

Student Last Name \*

Parent/Guardian 1 - Name \*

Parent/Guardian 1 - Address \*

Parent/Guardian 2 - Name

Parent/Guardian 2 - Address

Student Date Of Birth \* (MM/DD/YYYY)

Student ID - Local

Home Language \*

School District Name \*

Current Grade \* (age appropriate)  
- Please select a grade -

Date Of Entry into NY State School System \*

Has the Oral Interview Questionnaire been administered to this student? \*

According to the questionnaire, does the student have a gap of two or more years? \*

Why are you administering this test?

Create

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- ***Date of Entry into NY State School System (MM/DD/YYYY):*** Enter the student’s date of entry into the NY State School System. Enter the two-digit month, backslash, two-digit day, backslash, and four-digit year (e.g. June 24, 2015 is entered as 06/24/2015).
- ***Has the Oral Interview Questionnaire been administered to this student?*** Select TRUE or FALSE from the dropdown menu. The MLS should only be administered for students after the NY State SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire has been administered by a teacher.
- ***According to the questionnaire, does the student have a gap of two or more years?*** Select TRUE or FALSE from the dropdown menu.
- ***Why are you administering this test?*** You have four options to choose from:

Option	Clarification
Identify SIFE	To identify whether a student is SIFE (Student with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education) in conjunction with the NY State SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire and screeners.
ESL placement	This is not an appropriate reason to administer the MLS
Bilingual/dual-language program placement	This is not an appropriate reason to administer the MLS
General literacy evaluation	This is not an appropriate reason to administer the MLS

**8. Reading Comprehension Test, Optional Vocabulary/Early Literacy Tests, or Math Test**

**8.A Test Login**

To administer the MLS, click on the *Reading Comprehension* (or *Math, Vocabulary, or Early Literacy*) link on the homepage. After clicking on the link you will see the *Exam Login* page, which is the same for the Math test, the Early Literacy test, the Vocabulary test, and the Reading Comprehension test. You will need your school’s login credentials in order to administer the test. In order to begin administering the test, you will first need to fill-out the *Exam Login* form with the school and student’s information. If you do not have all of the student’s information at hand, you may modify it later by clicking on their ID number in the Reports Section. All fields are required in order to submit the form and begin the test. Fill in the following fields:

- **Proctor full name:** Enter the proctor’s first and last name.
- **Login:** Enter your school’s BEDS number.
- **Password:** Enter the test password you created. If you cannot remember the password, click on the *reset password* link. You will be redirected to a different page where you can get directions on how to reset your password.
- **Test Language:** Select the language in wish you want to administer the test. You will only be able to select the language after entering a valid BEDS login and password.
- **Student:** Select the student who you are administering the test to. If their name does not appear, register the student on the home screen under *Student Registration*. You will only be able to select the student after entering a valid BEDS login and password.



**Exam Login**

**Fill out and submit the form to continue.**

Proctor full name \*

Login (BEDS code) \*

Password \* [\[reset password\]](#)

Test Language \*  
(valid login required) ▾

Student \*  
(valid login required) ▾

**8.B Test Administration**

**If you are using Chrome, a “Translate this page?” box may come up. Make sure that students do NOT use the Translate option by clicking “NOPE.”**

**Students must NOT hit refresh during the course of the test. Doing so will result in a loss of their work and being taken back to the beginning of the test.**

After clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page, the test will begin. A new window will pop up for the exam in order to prevent accidentally clicking the back button, which would result

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in a loss of work. Ensure that the student is ready and has headphones on. For more information about the content of the test, the types of questions in each test, and the format, please see the Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, Early literacy, and Math sections (9.B.1, 9.B.2, 9.B.3, and 9.B.4) below.

Please ensure that students are reading everything and answering thoughtfully, not just clicking answers randomly. Answers may not be discussed among students. Additionally, in order to get an understanding of students' literacy skills and abilities, it is important that the student does not get assistance from fellow students, teachers, parents, and/or administrators. Students may receive assistance and ask for help during the practice questions, but once the scored questions begin, it is crucial that the student complete the answers by themselves. **When students randomly guess or cheat, their MLS results will be useless.**

### 8.B.1 Reading Comprehension

After clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page, the Reading Comprehension test will begin.

#### *8.B.1.1 Unscored Practice Portion of the MLS*

The test will begin immediately upon clicking the *Submit* button on the *Exam Login* page. The student should be comfortably seated at the computer with the headphones already on, as audio will begin playing immediately upon clicking the *Submit* button on the *Exam Login* page.

The Reading Comprehension test will first begin with unscored practice questions to familiarize the student with the format of the MLS. You may help students answer these questions, as any question that has “Practice” displayed on the top of the page is an unscored item.

The student will see the MLS logo under the title of the exam “Reading Comprehension” in the language of the exam and in English:

Arabic: “القراءة والفهم”

Bangla: “ পাঠ অনুধাবন পরীক্ষা ”,

Burmese: “စာဖတ်ခြင်း နားလည်သဘောပေါက်မှု ”,

Simplified Mandarin Chinese: “阅读理解”,

English: “Reading Comprehension”,

French: “Compréhension de la lecture”,

Fulani: “Janngude Faama”,

Haitian Creole: “Egzèsis Lekti”,

Maay Maay: “Fahamka Aqriyowka”,

Nepali: “पढ्ने क्षमता”,

Russian: “Понимание прочитанного”,

S’gaw Karen: “တၢ်သ့ဖးအတၢ်သ့ၣ်ညါန့ၢ်ပၢ်”,

Somali: “Fahamka Aqriyowka”,

Spanish: “Comprensión de lectura”,

Swahili: “Ufahamu wa kusoma”,

Urdu: “پڑھنا اور سمجھنا”

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While the logo is displayed, a qualified person who speaks the student’s home language informs the student in their home language that they will be doing some reading activities (i.e. reading some stories, articles, and other texts) and answering questions in the language of the exam. The student is informed in their home language that there is only one correct answer for each question and to answer the question carefully.

The test will automatically advance to displaying a text about dolphins. The Reading Comprehension test begins with the same passage about dolphins and two practice questions. The students will hear the passage in the language of the exam and see the same text written on the left-hand side of the screen. After the passage recording ends, a question will display on the right-hand side of the screen. For the practice questions only, the student will hear the question and all the answers read aloud. In order to advance to the next practice question, the student must listen to the voice that will give the correct answer and select that answer. Students may pause the audio, listen to the instructions or practice the reading passage and questions by clicking the green play button.

**Practice Question**

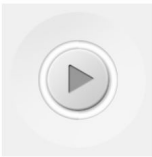
**Dolphins**

Dolphins are interesting animals. They breathe air, but they live in the water. They use a blowhole on top of their head to breathe. They also have a thick layer of fat that keeps them warm.

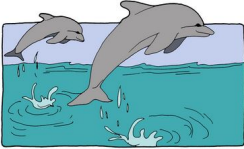
Dolphins are very social animals. They live in groups called pods. Pods have about 10-12 members.

Dolphins help and protect each other. When a dolphin is hurt or injured, other pod members take care of it. Sometimes dolphins **protect** other animals, such as humans.

Dolphins are also very smart. Dolphins communicate using clicks and whistles. They are also very playful. Dolphins can be

NEXT

After finishing both practice questions, the scored portion of the Reading Comprehension section will begin.

### *8.B.1.2 Scored Portion of the Reading Comprehension Test*


Students should complete the Reading Comprehension section on their own by reading the passages and answering the questions that follow. On the top of the page, instructions in the language of the exam direct the student to read the passage in its entirety. After the practice questions are completed, the reading passages will NOT be read aloud to the student. Please note that the student may have to scroll down to read the complete passage. See below for an example text from Spanish.

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Instrucciones: Lee con atención el texto entero. Luego, haz clic en el botón verde para mirar las preguntas correspondientes.

**La escuela de Goki**

Don Goki era el gorila más grande y sabio de la selva. Tenía orejas largas, ojos grandes, una boca enorme y una cara muy seria. Era el maestro de los gorilitas y cuando daba clase, se plantó firmemente a cuatro patas mientras que los gorilitas se sentaban quietos. Todos le tenían miedo a Don Goki, menos uno que se llamaba Luis.



...Continue scrolling...

...Text continues from above.....

MIRA LAS PREGUNTAS

After the entire passage has been read, the student will click on the green button (labeled “See the Questions” in the test language). After clicking on this button, a question will appear on the upper-right portion of the screen. Questions are displayed one at a time, and students cannot go back to a previously answered question. The student is instructed to read each question carefully before choosing the correct response. After response has been selected, the student is instructed to click the button labeled “Next” in the test language in order to continue to the next question.

After answering all questions for a specific passage, the test will progress to a new passage.



### *8.B.2 Vocabulary (Vocabulary Test is Optional)*

After clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page, the Vocabulary test will begin. There are four different question types for the MLS Vocabulary: compound words, context clues, multiple meanings, and synonyms. Each section will begin with practice questions, followed by scored questions. Separate Vocabulary portions of the MLS are available in English, Spanish, Simplified Mandarin Chinese, and Urdu. In the other languages, Vocabulary is embedded in the Reading Comprehension section.

#### *8.B.2.1 Vocabulary Test - Unscored Practice Portion*

The test will begin immediately upon clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page. The student should be comfortably seated at the computer with the headphones already on as audio will begin playing immediately upon clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page. Each section of the Vocabulary test will first begin with unscored practice questions to familiarize the student with the format of the MLS. You may help students answer any question that has “Practice” displayed on the top of the page since these are unscored items.

The student will see the MLS logo and “Vocabulary” in the language of the exam and English. While the logo is displayed, a qualified person who speaks the student’s home language informs the student that they will be completing vocabulary activities. The student will be asked to answer the question carefully because there is only one correct answer for each question.

The test will automatically advance to the practice questions. Each type of question is explained to the student. The students will hear the question and answer choices read in the language of the exam and see the same text written on the screen. In order to advance to the next practice question and then to the scored items, the student must select the correct answers as instructed. After finishing a particular type of practice question, students complete one or two questions of the same type independently. After completing the practice questions, students are instructed to click on the green button to begin the full test. Students may pause the audio or listen to the instructions, practice questions, and answers by clicking the green play button.

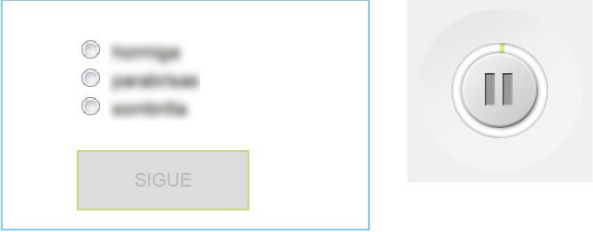
#### *8.B.2.2 Compound Words*

In this section, the student is informed that compound words are made up of two different words and the resulting compound word only has one meaning. For example, the word “anything” is made up of the words “any” and “thing.” The student reads three words and identifies the compound word.

**Ejercicio de práctica — Practice Question**

**Palabras compuestas**

Lee las tres palabras. Luego, elije la opción que contenga dos palabras. Haz clic en el botón SIGUE para continuar la actividad.



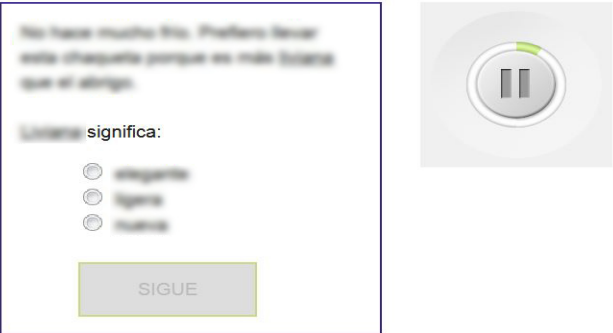
### 8.B.2.3 Context Clues

For the context clues section, the student is instructed by a qualified person who speaks the student’s home language to read a sentence carefully and select the definition of the underlined word. The student determines the definition based on the context provided by the sentence in which it occurs.

**Ejercicio de práctica — Practice Question**

**Deducción de significado**

Lee con atención la oración completa y luego, elige la definición correcta de la palabra subrayada. Haz clic en el botón SIGUE para continuar la actividad.



### 8.B.2.4 Multiple Meaning

In this section, the student is informed by a qualified person who speaks the student’s home language that some words can have more than one meaning. The student is given a sentence with a word underlined. The student is instructed to select the sentence where the meaning of the underlined word is the same in the target and answer sentences.

**Ejercicio de práctica — Practice Question**


**Palabras polisémicas**

Lee la primera oración. Luego elige la opción donde la palabra subrayada tenga el mismo sentido que en la primera oración. Haz clic en el botón SIGUE para continuar la actividad.

La alfombra se usó en el espacio para decorar un salón.

- Necesito pasar por el espacio para sacar dinero.
- Si tengo un espacio más habrá espacio para todos.
- Un espacio de personas en el espacio.

SIGUE



### 8.B.2.5 Synonyms

For the synonyms section, the student is instructed to read the underlined word and select the option that has the same or a similar meaning.

**Sinónimos**

Lee la palabra y elige la opción que más se parezca al significado de la palabra subrayada. Es decir, su sinónimo. Haz clic en el botón SIGUE para continuar la actividad.

El árbol seca:

- verde
- seco
- húmedo

SIGUE

### 8.B.3 Early Literacy (Early Literacy Test is Optional)

After clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page, the Early Literacy test will begin. The Early Literacy test has 10 sections that require different actions on the part of the student. It tests foundational reading skills such as phonological awareness, sound-letter correspondence, and

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basic reading comprehension at the word, sentence, and simple paragraph levels. A section may ask students to listen to two sounds and decide if they are the same or different, or ask them to choose the word they hear from a group of three words. At the simple paragraph level, students read a short text and select the sentence that completes the story. Each section will begin with practice questions followed by scored questions.

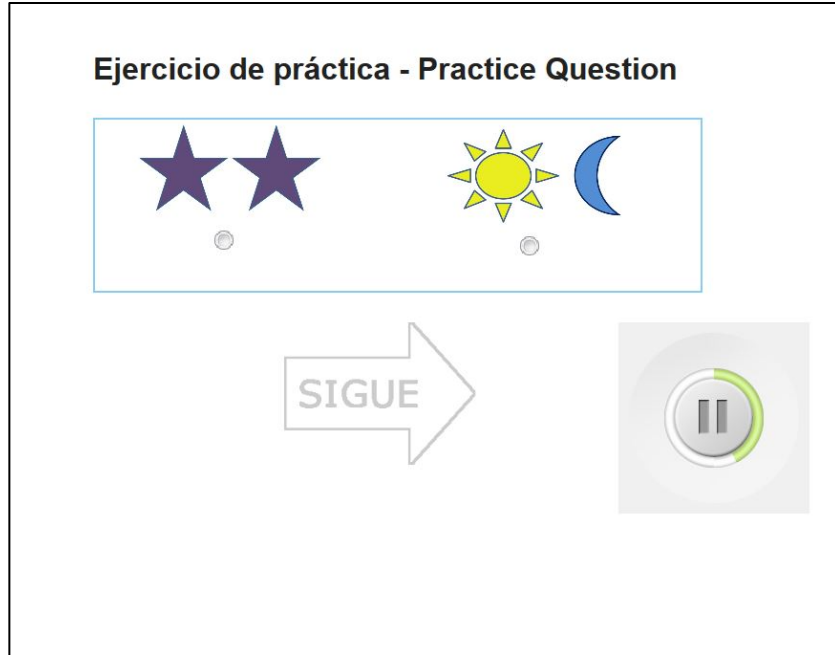
### *8.B.3.1 Unscored Practice Portion of the Literacy Test*

The test will begin immediately upon clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page. The student should be comfortably seated at the computer with the headphones already on as audio will begin playing immediately upon clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page.

Each section of the Early Literacy test will first begin with unscored practice questions to familiarize the student with the format of the Early Literacy test. You may help students answer any question that has “Practice” displayed on the top of the page since these are unscored items. Students may pause the audio or listen to the instructions and examples a second time by clicking the green play button.

The student will see the MLS logo under the title of the exam “Early Literacy” in the language of the exam and in English (i.e. English: “Vocabulary”, Spanish: “Lectoescritura”). While the logo is displayed, a qualified person who speaks the student’s home language informs the student that she/he will be doing some Early Literacy activities with different types of questions in the language of the exam. The student is informed that there is only one correct answer for each question and to answer the question carefully.

The test will automatically advance to the practice questions. Each type of question is explained to the student. The students will hear the question and answer choices read in the language of the exam and see the same text written on the screen. In order to advance to the next practice question and to the scored items, the student must answer the practice questions correctly. After finishing a particular type of practice question, students complete a number of questions of the same type on their own. After seeing the practice questions, students are instructed to click on the green button to begin the full test. Students may pause the audio or listen to the instructions and examples a second time by clicking the green play button.



8.B.4 Math Test

The test will begin immediately upon clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page. The student should be comfortably seated at the computer with the headphones already on as audio will begin playing immediately upon clicking the **Submit** button on the *Exam Login* page.

The Math test will first begin with unscored practice questions to familiarize the student with the format of the Math test. You may help students answer any question that has “Practice” displayed on the top of the page since these are unscored items. Students may pause the audio or listen to the instructions and examples a second time by clicking the green play button.

The student will see the MLS logo under the title of the exam “Math” in the language of the exam and in English:

Arabic: “**الرياضيات**”

Bangla: “**গণিত**”

Burmese: “**သင်္ချာ**”

Simplified Mandarin Chinese: “**数学**”

English: “Mathematics”

French: “Mathématiques”

Fulani: “Limngal”

Haitian Creole: “Matematik”

Maay Maay: “Xisaab”

Nepali: “गणित”

Russian: “Математика”

S’gaw Karen: “တၢ်သ့ဖးအတၢ်သ့ၣ်ညါနၢ်ပာ်”

Somali: “Xisaab”

Spanish: “Matemáticas”

Swahili: “Hesabu”

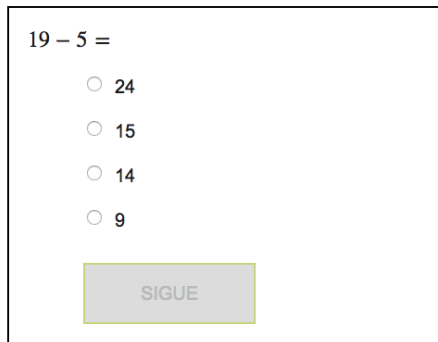
Urdu: “**ریاضی**”

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While the logo is displayed, a qualified person who speaks the student’s home language informs the student that she/he will be doing some math activities with different types of questions in the language of the exam. The student is informed that there is only one correct answer for each question and to answer the question carefully.

The test will automatically advance to the practice questions. Each type of question is explained to the student. The students will hear the question and answer choices read in the language of the exam and see the same text written on the screen. In order to advance to the next practice question and to the scored items, the student must answer the practice questions correctly. Students may pause the audio or repeat the instructions by clicking the green play button.

### Ejercicio de práctica



19 - 5 =

24

15

14

9

SIGUE



After finishing both practice questions, the scored portion of the Math test will begin.

### 8.B.5 End of Test

Although the test is untimed, it can take approximately 50 minutes. It is important that students answer each question until a screen appears that says: “Congratulations, you have finished the exam” in the language of the test. **If a student closes the browser before they see the screen below, all of their work will be lost and no results will be available.**

**Note:** After hitting *Submit*, if the browser is having trouble connecting to the server, a yellow bar will appear warning the student in English not to close the browser until the results have been sent. A green bar confirms that the results have been saved and the data was sent successfully. The student is then allowed to return to the homepage or close the browser. See the next page:

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The results are being saved. Please **do not close** the browser window. [1]

**Congratulations, you have finished the exam!**



The results have been saved. You may close the browser window.

**Congratulations, you have finished the exam!**



When you see the large MLS logo with the green bar on top after the student's test results are saved, you can navigate back to the homepage by entering *mls.slalab.org* in the address bar. Re-enter your password when prompted to view the Student's Literacy Skills and Abilities Report. This report is useful in giving teachers vital information about their students' existing literacy abilities, strengths, and needs.

### 9. Reports

Literacy Skills and Abilities Reports as well as Math Reports are immediately available to educators upon students' completion of the test and are accessible by logging in with your Administrator's credentials via the ***Student Reports*** link. The Literacy Skills and Abilities Teacher Reports from the MLS cover three areas that can be used by teachers to appropriately scaffold and leverage existing skills and to support students in learning content and English. The MLS was designed to align with home country standards and reports a home country grade level in reading comprehension. Most importantly, the MLS Literacy Skills and Abilities Reports outline the specific literacy skills and abilities of a student. These literacy skills and abilities, while elicited using the home language, are not unique to any specific language. They are metalinguistic skills (e.g. extracting information from a text, following a narrative, drawing conclusions/inferences) which will directly transfer and promote English literacy. However, the texts and question types are drawn from home country curricula and topics. The Math Reports are drawn from New York State Common Core Standards with culturally appropriate images, examples, and measurements, but reflect skills and abilities of a student that are not unique to their home language and directly transfer to and promote English Math problems. The Literacy Skills and Abilities Reports also break down the student responses by question type, specifying percentage of correct responses for each question type and exam. This allows teachers to identify students' existing strengths, as well as areas that need support.

#### 9.A Report Login

To view a student's Literacy Skills and Abilities Reports or Math Report after administration of the MLS, go to [mls.slalab.org](https://mls.slalab.org) and enter the master password to get to the *homepage*. From the homepage, click on the ***Student Reports*** link. After clicking on the ***Student Reports*** link, you will see the *Reports Login* page below for the MLS Literacy Skills and Abilities Reports or Math Report. In order to view the student's report, you will need to login by filling in the form. Fill in the following fields and click ***Log in***:

- ***Username***: Enter your school's credentials, which is your BEDS login.
- ***Password***: Enter the user password. If you cannot remember, click on the ***reset password*** link. You will be taken to a different page where you can get directions on how to reset your password.



**Sign in to access student pages.**

Username

Password  
 [\[reset password\]](#)



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After clicking *Log in* on the Student Reports page, you will see the *Reports* page below. This page will display all students and exams administered at your school site using the same username. There are seven columns.

- **Student ID and Student Name:** Name and NY State Student ID number. This can be edited by clicking on the student’s name, which links to the *Edit Student Information* page.
- **Current Grade:** Grade the student is currently enrolled in through New York state.
- **Test Language:** Language in which the MLS was administered.
- **Tests:** If the student has completed a test for Vocabulary, Reading, Math, or Early Literacy, you will be able to click on the corresponding subject to view the date and time that each test was taken. You may then click on a specific date/time to view and print the student’s Skills and Abilities Report for that exam.
- **Final Grade Placement:** Grade level at which the student placed for each subject exam taken according to NY state standards.
- **Possible SIFE:** If there is a two or more year gap between the student’s current grade enrollment and their final grade placement, they are a possible SIFE student which will be indicated with a *yes* in this column.

You are able to view the Literacy Skills and Abilities and Math Reports as often as needed. **Remember to print out a paper copy of the MLS Literacy Skills and Abilities and/or Math Reports for the student’s records.**

You may also download and view all results in one spreadsheet for your school by clicking on the *Export CSV* button in the top left under the *Reports* heading. You will be prompted to re-enter your username and password, and then the CSV will be downloaded immediately when you push enter. Each language is represented by an abbreviation:

Arabic: “ar”  
Bangla: “bn”,  
Burmese: “mya”,  
Simplified Mandarin Chinese: “zh”,  
English: “en”,  
French: “fra”,  
Fulani: “ful”,  
Haitian Creole: “ht”,

Maay Maay: “ymm”,  
Nepali: “nep”,  
Russian: “rus”,  
S’gaw Karen: “ksw”,  
Somali: “som”,  
Spanish: “es”,  
Swahili: “swa”,  
Urdu: “ur”



**Reports**

Export CSV

Show  entries

Search:

Student ID	Student Name	Current Grade	Test Language	Tests	Final Grade Placement	Possible SIFE?
00000	<a href="#">John Doe</a>	8	English	Vocabulary <a href="#">Reading</a> Math Early Literacy	6	yes
000000	<a href="#">test test</a>	9	English	Vocabulary <a href="#">Reading</a> Math <a href="#">Early Literacy</a>	9	no

## 9.B Content of Reports

The Literacy Skills and Abilities Reports for the Early Literacy, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension tests as well as the Math Report for the Math test display the student’s NY State Student ID number and the grade level in the home language.

### *Reading Comprehension:*

The MLS reports results for two modes of comprehension: Initial Understanding and Interpretation. 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. Additionally, the MLS Reading Comprehension Literacy Skills and Abilities Reports break down the home country and New York State Common Core Standards literacy skills that the student has, in keeping with the grade level in which the student is placed.

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An example of an advanced ninth grade Reading Comprehension Report appears below:

This student is able to read at an **Advanced 9th Grade** level in their home language, Chinese (Simplified).

Advanced ninth grade reading incorporates two main types of reading material: **first-person** essay reading in terms of the structure and language used; **literary** passages related to historical stories, first-person narratives, and poetry.

Advanced ninth grade readers demonstrate an ability to identify information that is explicitly and implicitly stated in the text. They are able to identify and generalize the main idea in several text types. Moreover, they can determine and summarize the author's purpose and point of view in expository writing.

In literature, advanced ninth grade readers demonstrate an ability to interpret metaphorical language in poetry, analyzing how the author uses figurative or evocative language. Students at this level are able to identify multiple interpretations of a poem and extrapolate meaning from advanced literary devices such as personification.

The MLS Reading Comprehension section evaluates home language literacy skills for English Language Learners. In an effort to create a more culturally and linguistically appropriate evaluation for Chinese-speaking newcomers, the Chinese MLS was designed to reflect current literature-based curricula and didactic principles from students' home countries. Text types and topics were selected according to popular Chinese literary traditions and genres that Chinese-speaking newcomers would have previously been exposed to in their home classrooms. These types include legends, myths, and testimonial literature such as biography and autobiography. Grade-level texts were then written using authentic language relative to the topic. It is important to note that the MLS marks a clear distinction between early and late grade levels to reflect students' academic progress within the school year.

Students begin the evaluation by reading third grade-level passages. Each reading selection is followed by multiple test items in order to assess two modes of comprehension: Initial Understanding and Interpretation. 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

## Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener (MLS) – User Manual

skills researched to be in line with both home country and New York State Common Core Standards.

The following information shows the student's performance on the leveled texts, broken down by grade. The minimum passing grade is 70%.

### *Vocabulary:*

Vocabulary Literacy Skills and Abilities Reports inform the reader that the MLS Vocabulary exam words use on the exam were chosen from grade-appropriate reading material as well as lists of words frequently found on standardized tests in the students' home countries. Additionally, the Vocabulary section tests a variety of important sub-skills of home language vocabulary knowledge; ability to glean meaning from context, synonym knowledge, and the ability to recognize compound words (the latter for fourth grade and below only). Each section is interpreted and discussed along with a representation of student performance in the form of a bar graph. The bar graph displays the percentage of correct answers only for the grade in which the student was placed. The bar graphs do not report results for the different grade-levels tests (e.g. if a student is placed in grade 5, the results do not include percent correct on grade 4 or grade 3 questions, as those skills and abilities are subsumed by grade 5).

An example of an advanced ninth grade Vocabulary Report appears below:

This student has a 9<sup>th</sup> grade level of vocabulary in their home language, Chinese.

The MLS Vocabulary section evaluates Chinese-language literacy skills for English Language Learners. The words chosen for the vocabulary section were culled from grade-appropriate reading material as well as lists of words frequently found on standardized tests in the students' home countries.

The vocabulary section tests a variety of important sub-skills of Chinese vocabulary knowledge.

Please note that the bar graphs display the student's performance on the questions presented in the grade they finished at.

### Context Clues

This section of the assessment tests a student's ability to glean meaning from context. This skill is very important for reading comprehension as it allows students to try and guess at what a previously unseen vocabulary word might mean. The words chosen for this section are more difficult than the synonyms and were put into a context designed to be accessible to newcomer students. They were decided to be more difficult based on word-frequency and the accessibility of the concept they are describing. Success in the Context Clues section indicates a student has the ability to derive word meaning from context.

### Synonyms

This section tells us whether or not a student knows a particular grade-level word. It tests vocabulary breadth as well as a student's ability to discern shades of meaning. Passing this section indicates that a student has a wide vocabulary appropriate for a particular grade or above. However, please note that *scoring poorly on this section does not necessarily indicate a below-grade level vocabulary!* Out of the hundreds of words potentially acquired in a certain grade, only ten were chosen. Passing this section indicates a large vocabulary, but failing it does not indicate a deficient one, especially if a student scores well on other vocabulary or reading tasks.

Success in the Synonyms section indicates the student has a large vocabulary.

### *Early Literacy:*

The Early Literacy Report informs the reader that the MLS Early Literacy Test items were created based on home country standards in order to more accurately evaluate beginning reading skills in English. The report describes and provides percentage scores for each sub-section of the two major parts of the MLS Early Literacy Test. The two parts of the test and report are Sounds and Letters (which focuses on pre-literacy skills) and Early Reading (which expands to early reading skills). The sections of the report, which increase in difficulty, are as follows:

#### Section 1: Sound-Letter Correspondence

- 1A. Sound Distinction
- 1B. Sound-Letter Correspondence with Audio Input
- 1C. Sound-Letter Correspondence with Visual Input
- 1D. Letter Identification

#### Section 2: Syllable Identification.

- 2A. Simple Syllables
- 2B. Consonant Clusters
- 2C. Complex Syllables

#### Section 3: Word Reading

#### Section 4: Sentence Reading

- 4A. Sentence-Picture Correspondence
- 4B. Connecting Ideas

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The report contains a bar graph for each of the four sections with a percentage score for each section and sub-section. Students who achieve 80% correct in a particular sub-section are designated as proficient in that skill, and students who achieve 80% or higher on the evaluation overall are recommended to take the English MLS Reading Comprehension test.

### *Math:*

The Math Report informs the reader that the MLS Math exam questions were chosen from grade-level appropriate items that are intended to be both culturally and linguistically relevant for SIFE students. Items test students' knowledge of mathematical procedures, interpretation, and problem-solving. The Math Report arranges items according to mathematical complexity and has classified items as either mathematical procedures (low verbal dependency) or mathematical literacy (high verbal dependency). Mathematical procedural questions involve operations, relationships, and problem-solving skills. Mathematical literacy questions test multiple skills simultaneously such as interpretation, logic, reasoning, and mathematical vocabulary. 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. Their grade level skills are interpreted and discussed along with a representation of student performance in the form of a bar graph. The bar graph displays the percentage of correct answers only for the grade in which the student was placed. The bar graphs do not report results for the different grade-levels tests (e.g. if a student is placed in grade 5, the results do not include percent correct on grade 4 or grade 3 questions, as those skills and abilities are subsumed by grade 5).

An example of a third grade Math Report appears below:

This student has a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade-level of math in their home language. In Grade 3, math skills are focused in four main areas: (1) understanding of multiplication and division, including strategies within 100; (2) understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions (numerator 1); (3) understanding of the structure and area of rectangles; and (4) describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes. At this level, students are able to multiply and divide whole numbers as well as utilize and compare solution strategies to learn the relationship between multiplication and division. They have a basic understanding of fractions and understand that the size of a fractional part is relative to the size of the whole, and can solve problems that compare fractions using visual models and equal numerators or denominators. They are able to measure area using rectangular arrays and can connect area to multiplication. These students can express the area of part of a shape as a unit fraction of the whole. Finally, they can use the sides and angles of shapes to compare and classify them.

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Here is a more detailed breakdown of the student’s capabilities at this level, with the bold items representing the newest acquired skills at this level:

### Geometry

- Reason with shapes and their attributes

### Measurement & Data

- Measure and estimate lengths in standard units
- Relate addition and subtraction to length
- **Recognize perimeter as an attribute of plane figures and distinguish between and area measures**
  - Solve real world and mathematical problems involving perimeters of polygons, including finding the perimeter given the side lengths, finding an unknown side length, and exhibiting rectangles with the same perimeter and different areas or with the same area and different perimeters
- Understand concepts of area and relate area to multiplication and to addition
  - Measure areas by counting unit squares
  - Relate area to the operations of multiplication and addition.

### Number & Operations in Base Ten

- Use place value to add and subtract
- Understand place value
- **Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic**
  - Fluently add and subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction
  - Use place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100

### Number & Operations in Fractions

- **Develop understanding of fractions as numbers**
  - Understand a fraction  $\frac{1}{b}$  as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into  $b$  equal parts; understand a fraction  $\frac{a}{b}$  as the quantity formed by  $a$  parts of size  $\frac{1}{b}$ .
  - Understand a fraction as a number on the number line; represent fractions on a number line diagram.
  - Explain equivalence of fractions in special cases, and compare fractions by reasoning about their size.

### Operations and Algebraic Thinking

- Add and subtract

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- Understand properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication and division
  - Apply properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide.
- Multiply and divide within 100
  - Fluently multiply and divide within 100, using strategies such as the relationship between multiplication and division
- Represent and solve problems involving multiplication and division.
  - Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations involving equal groups, arrays, and measurement quantities.

### 9.C Editing a Student's Biographical Information

To edit a student's biographical information, click on their Name in the second column from the left named *Student Name* while in the *Student Reports* page. After clicking on their name, you will see the *Edit Student Information* page. You may edit any of the fields. Submit changes by clicking **Save**. You can edit any of the fields below by selecting existing text and entering new text.

- **Student ID:** Change or enter the student's New York State student ID number.
- **Student ID - Local:** Change or enter the student's ID for your school. This information is not mandatory but may help your school's records in locating exam results.
- **BEDS code login:** This field cannot be changed.
- **Student First Name:** Change or enter the student's first name(s) as listed on official school records. Note that students may have more than one first name

**Edit Student Information**  
Student ID - NYSSIS \* (10-digit # from NYSED)  
Please use correct number. If not available, please check box.

1234567890  
Student ID - Local

BEDS code login

Student First Name \*  
Jane

Student Last Name \*  
Doe

Parent/Guardian 1 - Name \*

Parent/Guardian 1 - Address \*

Parent/Guardian 2 - Name

Parent/Guardian 2 - Address

Student Date Of Birth \* (MM/DD/YYYY)

Student ID - Local

Home Language \*  
Spanish

School District Name \*

Current Grade \* (age appropriate)  
- Please select a grade -

Date Of Entry into NY State School System \*  
05/01/2016

Has the Oral Interview Questionnaire been administered to this student? \*  
True

According to the questionnaire, does the student have a gap of two or more years? \*  
True

Why are you administering this test?  
To identify SIFE

Save



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(e.g. Maria Elena, Mary Sue). Be sure to enter all of the legal names of the student.

- ***Student Last Name:*** Change or enter the student’s last name(s) as listed on official school records. Note that students may have more than one last name (e.g. Serrano Garcia, Barrera Tobón). Be sure to enter all of the legal names of the student.
- ***Parent/Guardian Name:*** Change or enter the full legal name of the guardian(s) on record for the student.
- ***Parent/Guardian Address:*** Change or enter the address of record for the student’s guardian(s).
- ***Home Language:*** Change or enter the home language of the student. This should be the same as the language the exam is being administered in. If the student has more than one home language, enter each home language separated by commas and a space. You can report the home language(s) exactly as is indicated by the student. Often the same language will have different names depending on the community; conversely, different languages will be named the same.
- ***School District Name:*** Change or enter the name of the school district in which the student is currently enrolled.
- ***Current Grade:*** Change or enter the grade that the student is currently enrolled in.
- ***Date of Entry into New York State School System (MM/DD/YYYY):*** Change or enter the student’s date of entry into New York State School System. Enter the two-digit month, backslash, two-digit day, backslash, and four-digit year (e.g. June 24, 2015 is entered as 06/24/2015).
- ***Has the Oral Interview Questionnaire been administered to this student?*** Select true or false from the dropdown menu to indicate whether the NY State SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire has been administered by a teacher. The MLS should only be administered for students after the New York State SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire has been administered by a teacher.
- ***According to the questionnaire, does the student have a gap of two or more years?*** Change or select TRUE or FALSE from the dropdown menu. The MLS is intended to be used as a test tool and teacher support for SIFE, which are typically students with a gap of two or more years in their formal education.
- ***Why are you administering this test?*** Change or enter your purpose for test administration using the dropdown menu and selecting from the four choices.

### 10. Password guide and troubleshooting

#### 10.1 Passwords

There are two passwords of the MLS that you will need to know:

- Master password: Upon first entering the site, [mls.slalab.org](http://mls.slalab.org), you will always be asked to enter a password. The password for this page is **mlsnysed**. There is no “forgot password” option on this page. If you push the back button from the home page, you will be asked to re-enter this password.
- Password: This is the password you enter on the “Exam Login” screen along with your BEDS login. You choose this password when you apply for an account, and there is only one password per school. You also use this password to view and print Student Reports.
- Forgot Password? If you do not remember your password, click on the ***reset password*** link. A screen will pop up that will allow you to enter in your BEDS login. An email will then be sent to the email associated with the account, and you will be able to follow the instructions to reset your password.



#### Reset Proctor Password

Please enter your 12-digit BEDS code in the field below. A message on how to reset your proctor password will be sent to the email associated with your account.

**12-digit BEDS code**

Submit

#### 10.2 Troubleshooting

- *Are you having trouble with the site?* The first thing you should do is make sure that you are using the **Firefox or Chrome** internet browser. This test is not compatible with **MICROSOFT INTERNET EXPLORER or SAFARI**, and the test will not work properly if you are on one of these browsers.
- Check your internet connectivity and resolve any of those issues through the testing site.
- Ensure that the volume is working properly for the audio parts of the exam.
- Make sure to NOT refresh the page during a test. This will result in loss of the student’s answers.
- If you continue to struggle with the site, please contact an administrator for additional help.

## MLS Credits

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**Project Managers:** Shannon Webb, Christen N. Madsen II, Jennifer Chard

**Conceptualization:** Dr. Gita Martohardjono, Dr. Elaine Klein, Dr. Matt Huenerfauth, Shannon Webb, Sarah Cacicio, Ian Phillips

### **MLS Project Partners**

The New York State Education Department Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL)

CUNY Graduate Center

Bridges to Academic Success

The New York State Education Department Office of Assessment, Standards, and Curriculum

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