

# Working with Multilingual Learner (MLLs)/English Language Learners (ELLs)<sup>1</sup> Resource Guide

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<sup>1</sup> Under Commissioner's Regulations Part 154, "English Language Learners" are defined as students who, by reason of foreign birth or ancestry, speak or understand a language other than English and speak or understand little or no English, and require support in order to become proficient in English. New York State uses the term Multilingual Learner interchangeably with English Language Learner, and generally refers to this population as Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners (or, MLLs/ELLs). This abbreviation is used in NYSED guidance and other public materials.

## Introduction

This guide aims to provide educators with information and strategies to support Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners (MLLs/ELLs) in their classrooms. It offers practical ideas about how to get to know and assess students and provide effective instruction for MLL/ELL success. This guide is divided into three parts:

- Part I: Getting to know your students
- Part II: Understanding Language Proficiency Levels
- Part III: Designing Instruction with MLL/ELL Students at the Center, and
- Part IV: Using Strategies to Support Learning.

Part I: Getting to know your students, provides teachers with helpful information for learning more about their MLL/ELLs. It begins with a discussion of how language and bilingualism works through case studies of students with different language backgrounds. The various subgroups into which MLL/ELL students are classified are also described.

Part II of the guide describes the different levels of language proficiency educators can use to begin to assess where their students are on the continuum of language proficiency. The following section, Part III of this guide, focuses on designing meaningful instruction for MLL/ELL students. It begins with how to set up a classroom for effective instruction, including how to create a multilingual ecology and a culturally relevant learning environment. Next, this section details how to plan integrated units of study where language and literacy are taught through meaningful content.

Finally, Part IV of this guide provides specific strategies teachers can incorporate into their teaching in order to facilitate the use of students' home languages as resources for learning. The use of the home language, also called translanguaging, is a best practice with MLLs/ELLs and appears throughout this guide. These strategies have been adapted from *Translanguaging in Curriculum and Instruction: A CUNY-NYSIEB Guide for Educators* (Hesson, Seltzer, and Woodley, 2014). Each strategy is briefly explained and then illustrated through elementary, middle and high school classroom vignettes linked to a relevant Next Generation Learning Standard for English Language Arts or Mathematics.

A series of *Group Activities*, *Discussion Questions* and *Learning Partner Activities* are provided throughout the guide. Pedagogical staff using this resource as a professional learning guide can use these engagements to extend their learning through reflection, discussion and action. Included in this guide are pictures of activities and classroom wall displays from CUNY-NYSIEB schools. Other pictures, including book covers, have been obtained from the Internet.

## I. Getting to know your students

With more than 200 languages spoken within its borders, New York State is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse places in the world (New York State Education Department, 2018). Because MLLs/ELLs make up a growing percentage of the student population, New York State schools benefit from this richness of languages and cultures. Educators can begin to get to know their MLL/ELL students by finding out about their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Having more than one language is among students' greatest assets (Billings & Walqui, 2019). Because of this, educational programs for MLL/ELLs across New York State aim to draw on home languages as a resource to ensure that all students are able to excel academically (NYSED, 2018).

Just as there is a diversity of languages spoken by the students of New York State, there is great variation in their cultural and educational backgrounds. Each MLL/ELL student comes to school with a unique background which educators can learn about in order to better support student learning. For example, some are born in the United States, while others emigrate from other countries. Some of these students have received formal schooling, and some have not. Even when students speak the same home language, for example Spanish, they may come from different countries with different cultural backgrounds (Freeman, Freeman, Soto & Ebe, 2016).

Hearing students' stories helps educators understand the linguistic resources MLL/ELL students bring to school. In order to help MLLs/ELLs develop English language proficiency, it is important to understand their linguistic backgrounds, how they use language and how language works. To help you deepen your understanding, below you will read about Maya, Zhang, and Nazir. In order to understand bilingualism, we will learn about these three students and how they use language.

### Learning Partners

While Maya, Zhang and Nazir are all bilingual students who are developing English language proficiency, their backgrounds vary greatly.

1. As you read their stories, consider the MLL/ELLs in your classroom.
2. With your partner, compare and contrast their backgrounds of these students with those of your own.

*Maya is a bright, energetic third grader who was born in the United States. She attended a monolingual English pre-school and kindergarten and now attends a bilingual school. She*



*speaks Spanish at home with her parents who are from El Salvador but she always speaks in English with her younger brother, Romero. At home they watch TV in both Spanish and English. On her own, Maya reads books in English and, occasionally, her parents will read books to her in Spanish.*

*Maya always speaks in Spanish with Mamá Concha, her grandmother from El Salvador who doesn't speak English. and*

*her uncle from El Salvador who does speak English but is more comfortable speaking in Spanish. She also speaks in Spanish with her parents' friends. However, with her neighbors, who are from New York, Maya speaks mostly in English. No one told her to use English with the neighbors; she just figured out that English was a stronger language for many of them, even though they sometimes speak Spanish to others around her.*

*At soccer practice after school, the coaches speak Spanish to all the kids. Maya speaks in Spanish with the coaches, but then uses mostly English when talking with her teammates. When a new girl from Mexico joined the team, Maya spoke to her in Spanish. Maya uses her two languages with different people depending on what she perceives to be their level of proficiency in either language.*

*Like most bilinguals, Maya is not completely balanced in English and Spanish. She uses English more often at school, with her peers, and with her neighbors. She uses Spanish more at home. While she is comfortable using oral language, her teacher finds that she struggles using both English and Spanish for academic purposes. Over time, Maya's bilingualism and language use will continue to change depending on her school, the places she lives, and the people she communicates with most often.*

Maya provides an example of the dynamic language practices of bilingual students. While older notions of bilingualism theorized that bilinguals use their languages the same way and are equally competent in both languages in all areas, we now understand that “[b]ilinguals usually acquire and use their languages for different purposes, in different domains of life, with different people. Different aspects of life often require different languages” (Grosjean 2010, 29). Rather than developing equal abilities in each language, bilinguals develop the language they need to speak to different people in different settings or domains when discussing different subjects. In other words, each language complements the other.

## **How We Use Language**

Just as Maya is able to use Spanish or English in different contexts, with different people, monolingual speakers use language in a similar way. The language we use when we are speaking in a formal meeting differs from the language we use when talking with friends or disciplining a child or teaching a class. The ways we use language vary by situation, and the features (the words, sounds, word order, etc.) of “English” or “Spanish” or “Chinese” vary depending on the specific language structure and the context.

Even when working in only one language, we find that our students have unique language practices. Consider how different 7-year-olds talk, or middle school students with different backgrounds. Their language would vary even if they were the same age in the same class.

As Garcia, Johnson and Seltzer, 2017)

differently, depending on who they are, what they are doing, what they are feeling, and with whom they are interacting. Now think of how different groups of English speakers (e.g., African American, British, Texan) or Spanish speakers (e.g., Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican) use the 'same' language. Their so-called 'English' or 'Spanish' would also be very different, reflecting the language practices used in their communities. It is important to remember that monolingual English speakers and monolingual Spanish speakers, or those considered monolingual speakers of any language, are in fact multidialectal because they can use more than one variety of the “same” language. If we cannot say that there is a single English or Spanish or Arabic for those who are monolingual, we can imagine how much more complex it is to think about the languages of bilinguals (p.18).

Bilingual speakers have even more choices to make than multidialectal monolingual speakers as they use language to communicate. This is because their language repertoires include many more language features from which to choose. Imagine a language repertoire like a bank of language features that can be accessed. Language features include, for example, sounds, nouns, verbs, adjectives, tense systems, pronoun systems, gender distinctions, and syntactic rules. Though from a societal point of view,

bilinguals are said to speak two languages, from their own perspective, bilingual speakers have just one bank of language. This language repertoire includes linguistic features that are associated socially and politically with one language or another and are named as English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and so on. Bilingual speakers pull features from their language repertoire, or bank, to communicate in what are called different languages.

*Code-switching* is a term that has been used to refer to the practice of switching between two languages. This term assumes that bilinguals are switching between two separate codes or languages stored in their brains. García and Wei (2014) however, use the term *translanguaging*. They argue that bilingual speakers do not switch between two linguistic codes. Rather they have one linguistic system and use features of this single system as they communicate.

When bilingual speakers bring in words from both languages, they enrich conversation much in the same way that having a large vocabulary in one language allows a person to express herself more fully. Just as bilingual families use multiple languages in everyday conversations at home, teachers can use all of their students' languages in their classrooms as well. By facilitating the extension of this use of multiple languages into their classrooms, MLL/ELLs can use all of their language for learning in school.

The story of Zhang<sup>2</sup>, a 13-year-old 7th grade student from China, helps us further understand the idea of bilingual students having one bilingual repertoire with language features students use, or suppress, as they communicate with different people and learn in school. In Zhang's case, his teachers support the use of his entire linguistic repertoire for learning. Teachers like Zhang's are able to facilitate this even when they don't speak their student's home languages.

*Zhang is a 13-year-old who immigrated to the U.S. from Fuzhou, China at the end of 5th grade. He is a Newcomer ELL in a stand-alone English as a New Language class. Zhang attends a large, urban middle school.*

*When he arrived from China, his teachers found Zhang to be quiet and reserved. He had taken some English at his school in China, yet struggled to understand all but very simple words and looked to Mandarin-speaking peers to help him communicate. In the last two years, however, as his teachers have invited Zhang to use whatever language he feels most comfortable with to help him accomplish classroom activities, he has come out of his shell and has even experimented more with English.*

*Inviting Zhang to use Mandarin to accomplish classroom tasks also alerted teachers to his*



*well-developed academic abilities in the language: he can write whole stories and essays with ease and often reads novels in the language. Teachers encourage Zhang's participation and continued academic growth by using web-based translation software to communicate their prompts and questions in subject area classes. Zhang also uses the web-based translation software on a class computer, for instance, when he responds to class tasks partially or*

*wholly in Mandarin and translates them. His teachers also use Chinese-language texts, videos, and peers in the class to support Zhang as his English language proficiency develops. Zhang now does not shy away from speaking to classmates and teachers, even in English. He has also developed a great deal of confidence: at the end of 6th grade, he stood up in front*

<sup>2</sup> Source: CUNY-NYSIEB website.



*of his Social Studies class and gave a presentation in Mandarin about the Spartans and Athenians in Ancient Greece. While he still needs to use machine translation software for writing and when he doesn't understand questions, Zhang now tries to write as much as possible in English. Based on Zhang's progress, his teachers are sure that he will reach the next level of English proficiency on the New York State exam by the end of 7th grade.*

By encouraging Zhang to use his entire linguistic repertoire in school, Zhang's teachers found that he became more confident which helped his English language development. By providing him with opportunities to use Mandarin, he was able to show all that he knew and to build on it. Instead of falling behind because of his limited English, Zhang was able to participate in class projects and learn new content in a language he understands, while he continues to develop English.

While Zhang quickly excelled in school once given appropriate support, others take much longer. Why is it that some newcomer students seem to do so well, while others take longer? A common misconception is that certain students just work harder or that their culture, families, or parents value school more. What we find, however, when we examine students' backgrounds, is that for a variety of reasons, some MLLs/ELLs have had more time in school than others. Consider the story of Nazir<sup>3</sup>, a 16-year-old 9<sup>th</sup> grade student from Yemen. Unlike Zhang, who had attended school in China, Nazir had to work and had few opportunities to attend school before moving to New York.

*Nazir arrived from Yemen and was placed in the 9th grade. He was identified as a Student with Interrupted/ inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE) because he lived and worked in a rural area of Yemen and had limited opportunities for formal schooling. Nazir attends high school in a large city in Western New York, where he has been placed in an English as a New Language (ENL) program.*



*When he first entered high school, he was unfamiliar with basic school routines, and was overwhelmed by being in a new setting. He spent much of his class time doodling and writing his name on his folder. His school programs 9th and 10th grade students together, so the 10th graders can provide peer language support to the*

*newcomer 9th graders. Upon his entrance to the school, he was paired with Arabic-speaking students so that they could help him understand how to navigate the classroom and school routines. He also received small-group English literacy support.*

*Nazir is a very friendly and social student. Despite the fact that he started in 9th grade with almost no English, he has made friends with students who speak different languages and come from many cultures. He loves to play soccer and talk about it. This has been a common ground for him to socialize with kids from a variety of backgrounds. Because of his social skills, Nazir's social English has developed very quickly and he was able to communicate orally in English early on. Since many of his friends are from Latin American countries, he has also learned some Spanish.*

*Nazir is now able to understand the routines of the class and use them to his advantage. He thrives during group work and takes a leadership role in organizing his group and getting everyone to focus. Working in a group helps Nazir because it provides a venue*

<sup>3</sup> Source: CUNY-NYSIEB website.

*for him to participate in the class and check his understanding with other students. The school's philosophy is to encourage students to use their home language for learning English and to work in small groups of students who share a home language. While he is making significant progress, Nazir does continue to struggle to conceptualize what he is supposed to do in his class work, particularly if an activity has more than one component.*

Like Zhang, Nazir was paired with students who spoke his home language and could help make the content comprehensible. Knowing his background, it's understandable why he is taking longer to understand school routines and excel academically than a student like Zhang who came to New York directly from a school in China bringing a wealth of school-knowledge with him. Nazir's outgoing personality, however, will help him communicate with Arabic, Spanish, and English-speaking peers who can support him in school.

This section introduced three MLL/ELL students attending schools in New York who have different backgrounds. Through their stories, we explored how they use language to begin to understand bilingualism. Their stories also provide a window for understanding students' varying English language development and academic achievement. In the following section, we will discuss subgroups of MLL/ELL students to further understand similarities and differences among English learners in order to provide effective instruction.

## Who are New York State's MLLs/ELLs? Multilingual Learner/ English Language Learner Subgroups

In getting to know your students' individual characteristics, teachers will determine to which MLL/ELL subgroups they belong. The great variation among MLLs/ELLs is reflected in their age of arrival, prior schooling experiences, and literacy levels in their home language, among other variables. Some do very well while many struggle. Teaching these diverse students is complex. In a review of the research on concerns about MLLs/ELLs, García (2000) points out that "There is no typical [MLL/ELL]." (3). It is important that teachers consider some basic differences among MLLs/ELLs as they plan instruction for them, including differences in their academic background and their academic language proficiency. Figure 1.1 briefly describes six types of MLL/ELL students that serve as the basis for the MLL/ELL subgroups in New York State: Newcomer ELLs, Developing ELLs, Long-term ELLs (LTE), ELLs with an IEP, Students with Interrupted / inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE), and Former ELLs. Four of these subgroups are further described below. NYSED (2019a) website provides detailed information for each subgroup.

Teachers and administrators can also contact the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks ([RBERNs](#)) which provide technical assistance and professional development in order to improve instructional and assessment practices and educational outcomes of MLL/ELLs.

<b>Newcomer</b>	Students who have been in our schools for three years or less and are Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners. Please note that this subgroup includes both secondary school Newcomers and US born kindergarten MLLs/ELLs.	63.3%
<b>Developing ELLs</b>	Students who have received MLL/ELL services for 4 to 6 years.	24.9%
<b>Long-term ELLs</b>	Students who have completed at least six years of MLL/ELL services in a New York State school and continue to require ELL services.	11.7%

<b>ELL Students with Disabilities</b>	MLLs/ELLs who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). An IEP team determines a student's eligibility for special education services and the language in which special education services are delivered.	21.9%
<b>Students with Interrupted Formal Education</b>	MLLs/ELLs who have attended schools in the U.S. for less than twelve months and who, upon initial enrollment in 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 U.S.	8.7%
<b>Former ELLs</b>	A Former ELL is a student who was identified as a MLL/ELL and has met the criteria for exiting MLL/ELL status. Upon exiting MLL/ELL status, Former ELLs are entitled to receive at least two years of Former ELL services.	8.4%

**Figure 1.1** Multilingual Language Learner/English Language Learner subgroups and student percentages (NYSED, 2019).

#### **Newcomer ELLs<sup>4</sup>**

When young people arrive at U.S. schools from other countries, they may feel overwhelmed by all the new experiences they encounter. As teachers, we can also find it challenging to meet the diverse needs of newly-arrived students, due to their highly variable experiences, backgrounds, and levels of comfort in school settings. Although both Zhang and Nazir described in the case studies above were both Newcomer students, their backgrounds were vastly different.

Some Newcomer ELLs are students born in another country who have recently traveled to the United States. Newcomers who are also identified as MLL/ELLs, speak one or more Languages at home and are learning English in school. An incredibly diverse array of students falls under the Newcomer /ELL designation. A Newcomer ELL could range from a very young child just entering the school system whose home and new language practices are still developing, to a high school student who has well-developed academic skills in his/her home language. Newcomer ELLs might also include students with other designations, such as Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE), Refugee (students fleeing their country of origin because of persecution, war, or other disruption), Unaccompanied Minor children or who arrive from other countries without their parents).

Newcomer ELLs students vary in terms of...

1. Nation of origin
2. Age at which they entered the U.S. school system
3. Language(s) they speak at home
4. Comfort with academic environments
5. Access to schooling in their home country
6. Comfort with home language and English school-based literacies
7. Whether they studied English in their home countries
8. Socioeconomic factors
9. Racial, religious, and ethnic identity
10. Extent of ties to family, friends, language, and culture abroad

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Resources for Work with Particular Subgroups on the CUNY-NYSIEB website.



**Further Resources on Newcomer ELLs:**

- To learn more about identifying and supporting Newcomer MLLs/ELLs, refer to the [NEWCOMER TOOL KIT](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf) (<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf>) a comprehensive resource provided by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Refugee Students: <http://www.colorincolorado.org/ell-basics/special-populations/refugee-students>
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth: <http://www.colorincolorado.org/ell-basics/special-populations/unaccompanied-children-youth>

**Long Term English Language Learners (LTEs)<sup>5</sup>**

Many MLLs/ELLs in U.S. schools receive language supports and services for extended periods of time without passing their state's English language proficiency exam. When this happens, these MLL/ELL students are labeled "Long Term English Language Learners" or "LTEs." In New York State, if a student has been receiving ENL (English as a New Language), services for six years without passing the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), he or she is classified as a Long Term ELL. . Most students identified as LTEs are in middle or high school.

It is important to note that most students with this designation speak English fluently. They have been in the U.S. for years, many from birth. Their primary language skills (listening and speaking) are usually much more developed than their secondary language skills (literacy, especially academic literacy). There are many reasons student may be LTEs:

1. **Students who have received inconsistent U.S. schooling:** Students in this category have been shifted by their school system between bilingual education, English as a New Language (ENL) programs, and mainstream classrooms with no ENL services.
2. **Transnational students:** These are students who have moved back and forth between the United States and their families' countries of origin during their school-aged years and may or may not have gaps in their schooling history.
3. **Students who have received monolingual language support:** Some students receive ENL programming consistently, but these programs have failed to build upon the students' home language practices.

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Resources for Work with Particular Subgroups on the CUNY-NYSIEB website.

#### **Additional Resources on Long-Term English Language Learners:**

- *Meeting the Unique Needs of Long-Term English Language Learners* (Olsen, 2014). Available from [https://www.rcoe.us/educational-services/files/2012/08/NEA\\_Meeting\\_the\\_Unique\\_Needs\\_of\\_LTEs.pdf](https://www.rcoe.us/educational-services/files/2012/08/NEA_Meeting_the_Unique_Needs_of_LTEs.pdf)
- *A CUNY-NYSIEB Framework for the Education of 'Long-Term English Learners': 6–12 Grades* (Ascenzi-Moreno, L., Kleyn, T., & Menken, K., 2013) Available from <http://www.cuny-nysieb.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CUNY-NYSIEB-Framework-for-LTEs-Spring-2013-FINAL.pdf>
- *Supporting Multilingual Learners/Long-Term English Language Learners in New York State* (Ebe, A. & Vogel, S., 2019) Available from <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/bilingual-ed/topic-brief-long-term-ells-a.pdf>

#### **MLLs/ELLs Students with Disabilities<sup>6</sup>**

MLL/ELL students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) receive both mandated English as a New Language (ENL) support as well as services for a documented learning need per an IEP. These students are an incredibly diverse group in terms of language and cognition. Also, because students' performances fluctuate over time, they can actually be “decertified” as they move through the school system. Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize the talents, literacies, and intelligences of MLLs/ELLs with IEPs, even as we acknowledge their particular needs. For more information on identifying, monitoring, and providing appropriate services for these students, refer to Chapter 6 of the US Department of Education's frequently updated *English Learner Toolkit* (2017).

#### **Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE)**

Young people like Nazir, whose schooling in their home country has been interrupted or insufficient, can arrive in U.S. schools in need of the language and literacy skills that will help them achieve academic success. These students, identified as Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE), may also need lower grade-level content knowledge and basic school habits.

Students with Interrupted / Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE) typically arrive in the U.S. with literacy and content skills that do not meet the standards held by schools. Most SIFE are additionally identified as Newcomers, meaning that they are recent arrivals to the U.S. and U.S. schools. There are many reasons students may be SIFE:

- Lack of schooling due to political or social circumstances in their home country
- Lack of availability of formal education beyond the early years in their home country
- Travel between the U.S. and their home country that has led to gaps in their education (DeCapua & Marshall, 2010).

It is important to realize that many SIFE have specific social and psychological needs due to traumatic migration experiences or lived experience with war or displacement. Some may also need assistance learning basic school routines, given their limited experience with formal schooling. Last, it is

also common for these students to report feeling frustrated or isolated given how academically different they may be from their peers (Spaulding, Carolino & Amen, 2004). Because of these complex socioemotional needs, many MLLs/ELLs labeled as SIFE do not get the support they need and may eventually drop out of school (Spaulding, Carolino, & Amen, 2004).

#### **Further Resources on Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education:**

- Bridges to Academic Success (N.D.). *SIFE Project: Curriculum Overview*. Available at <http://bridges-sifeproject.com/program-overview/>
- Klein, E. C. & Martohardjono, G. (2009). Understanding the Student with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) Phase II: A study of SIFE skills, needs and achievement. *Report to the New York City Department of Education*.
- OBEWL Website: <http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/students-interruptedinconsistent-formal-education-sife>

While the subgroups described above begin to provide educators with a broad understanding of differences among MLLs/ELLs, it is important to note that there are many variations among students' lives and educational experiences, even within these categories. In order to best serve MLL/ELL students, it is essential that educators and school leaders look beyond labels and get to know individual learners.

#### **Learning About Students' Multilingual Trajectories**

On the first day of class each semester, Ann, a professor of education, would ask her graduate students, who were kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers in New York City schools, how many of their students were bilingual. Several would raise their hands. She would then ask how many knew which languages their students spoke and which countries they or their families came from. Many of the teachers had an idea about some of their students, but certainly not all. Ann would then encourage these teachers to talk with their students, to interview them, to get to know about their bilingualism or multilingualism and their cultures. Every semester, teachers would return to class, often very surprised, with valuable information they had never considered gathering about the languages and cultures of their students: "Educators may talk about the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy, but how are teachers to enact such pedagogy if they do not systematically collect information about who their students are, the languages they speak, their cultural practices, their experiences and the worlds that they know?" (Garcia, Johnson, and Seltzer, 2017, p. 31). The New York State Education Department has created the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework involves creating student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.

Although schools may categorize MLL/ELL students into groups such as Newcomers, LTE, or SIFE, teachers are typically not encouraged to think about bilingual students beyond these categories. For example, both Zhang and Nazir would be categorized as Newcomer students; however, their language, as well as their cultural and academic backgrounds, differ tremendously. In order to address the need to systematically learn about students' backgrounds, educators have developed interview protocols and MLL/ELL student identification profiles. Figure 1.2 provides an Interview Protocol for MLL/ELL students that teachers can adapt and use to get to know them. Additional resources for identifying and documenting students' bilingualism can be found in Garcia, Johnson and Seltzer's (2017) *The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning*. In their text, the authors

provide both a Bilingual Student Identification Checklist as well as a Bilingual Student Profile for teachers and administrators to adapt and use in their schools. Celic (2009) also suggests keeping class profiles of students on a chart which would include information for each student including their name, home language(s), country of origin, information about their language proficiency and assessment data. She provides templates for documenting this information.

#### **Group Activities & Discussion Questions**

1. In groups of three, assign the case studies of Maya, Zhang and Nazir for each group member to carefully re-read.
2. As you read about your student, take notes about what might be affecting his or her language learning and academic achievement.
3. Once you have completed the reading, summarize what you learned about the student.
4. As you listen to your group members, jot down notes about the student who is being presented.
5. Share examples of when and where each student was able to draw on the full features of his or her linguistic repertoire.
6. Discuss the factors that may be affecting his or her language learning and academic achievement.
7. Consider the subgroups of MLL/ELL learners. Describe a student in your classroom or school who fits into one of these categories and give reasons for your choice.

**Figure 1.2: MLL/ELL Interview Protocol for Enrolled Students**  
(Adapted from the CUNY-NYSIEB website)

Question	Rationale	Response
<p>What's your name?</p> <p><i>For students who haven't always lived in New York State:</i> When did you come to [NY/the US]? What countries have you traveled to? What language/s do you speak at home? What language/s do you and your friends speak?</p>	To obtain basic information	
<p><i>For students coming from another country:</i></p> <p>Who were you living with in your country before you left?</p> <p>Who do you live with now?</p> <p>How do you feel about this/your new school?</p> <p><i>For new students:</i> How do you feel about moving to [this city/the US]?</p>	To understand living situation and socioemotional needs	
<p>What language/s have your classes been in?</p> <p>What language/s do you know how to read and write?</p> <p><i>For students coming from another school/country:</i></p> <p>What grade were you in at school in [your home country]?</p> <p>What was your school like in [your home country]?</p> <p>Tell us a story about an assignment you did at your school before you left.</p> <p>How did your teacher help you?</p> <p>Did you work with other students? How?</p> <p>Did you work with technology? How?</p>	To familiarize ourselves with the students' educational experiences	
<p>What are your goals for learning English?</p> <p>What are your goals for continuing to learn [your home language]?</p>	To create partnerships and set academic goals	
<p>How can we help you in school?</p> <p>How can we help you at home?</p>	To link student and families to services in the school and the community	

**Figure 1.2, continued** MLL/ELL Interview Protocol for Enrolled Students  
(Adapted from the CUNY-NYSIEB website)

## Learning about MLL/ELL Home Languages and Countries of Origin

Teachers in New York State have the unique privilege of teaching children from a wide variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Recent statistics reveal that of the 2,622,879 students in New York State, 243,323 (9%) are MLLs/ELLs. Over half of all MLL/ELLs are in elementary school grades while there are fewer in middle and high school. One reason there are fewer MLLs/ELLs in upper grades is that as students become proficient in English, they are no longer identified as MLLs/ELLs but as Former ELLs. However, over a quarter of all MLLs/ELLs are in high school, which is a major entry point for recently arrived MLLs/ELLs (New York State Education Department, 2019).

While Spanish and Chinese-speaking students continue to make up the largest number of MLLs/ELLs in NYS, there has been a significant increase in linguistic diversity among the MLL/ELL population in recent years. It can be a challenge when teachers encounter many different languages in their classrooms and when the students speak languages that, for the teacher, are new and unfamiliar. Teachers need to keep up with the changing linguistic backgrounds of their MLL/ELL students. Of the prevalent languages within the last 5 years, there have been increases in Arabic, Bengali, Karen, Nepali, Uzbek, Somali, and Japanese speakers. (NYSED, 2019).

A good first step is for teachers to begin to get to know their students even before classes start by looking through school records to see their home language. This information can be found in each MLL/ELL's [Home Language Questionnaire](#), completed by parents when their child entered the NYS school system. This is typically filed in a student's cumulative record. Once teachers know their students' home languages, they can gather information about them, perhaps learn some classroom phrases to welcome students and find resources in those languages.

## II. Understanding Language Proficiency Levels

Once teachers become familiar with the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their students, they can begin to assess where they are on the continuum of language proficiency. Language proficiency is based on a student's ability to understand, speak, read and write for both *conversational* and *academic purposes*.

The New York State Education Department (2015) provides a general description of five levels of English language proficiency (See figure 2.1): Entering, Emerging (low intermediate), Transitioning (intermediate), Expanding (advanced) and Commanding. The descriptions focus specifically on MLLs/ELLs' academic language proficiency and provide educators with a starting idea of students' proficiency in English. Student levels are determined by scores on the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) initial entrance exam or the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), which determines MLL/ELL proficiency at the end of each year for students who are receiving English as a New Language (ENL) services.

Description of NYS English Language Proficiency Levels	
Level	Entering (Beginning)
Description	A student at the Entering level has great dependence on supports and structures to advance academic language skills and has not yet met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts (settings).



Level	Emerging (Low Intermediate)
Description	A student at the Emerging level has some dependence on supports and structures to advance academic language skills and has not yet met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts (settings).
Level	Transitioning (Intermediate)
Description	A student at the Transitioning level shows some independence in advancing academic language skills, but has yet to meet the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts (settings).
Level	Expanding (Advanced)
Description	A student at the expanding level shows great independence in advancing language for academic purposes skills and is approaching the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts (settings).
Level	Commanding
Description	As measured by the NYSITELL, a student at the Commanding level has met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts within his or her grade level. If a student attains Commanding level on the NYSITELL, the student is NOT an ELL and is NOT considered a former ELL and is therefore not entitled to Former ELL testing accommodations or services. If a student scores Commanding on the NYSESLAT, this is a student who has exited ELL status, is designated as a Former ELL and he or she will receive two years of Former ELL testing accommodations and services. See the OBEWL Former ELLs Guidance.

**Figure 2.1** NYSED Language Proficiency Stages.

## Part III. Designing Instruction with MLL/ELL students as the Focus

### Setting up a Classroom for MLL/ELL Students

In addition to assessing your MLL/ELL students and getting to know their backgrounds, an essential step in preparing to work with students is to carefully consider and prepare the classroom space for optimal learning. As teachers step into their classrooms, it is helpful to think of the classroom as an environment that should support two goals simultaneously: language learning and learning grade-level content (Freeman, Freeman, Soto & Ebe, 2016; Gibbons 2002).

If teachers were to imagine that they were multilingual learners themselves trying to learn English and to keep up academically with classmates, what would help facilitate this? Celic (2009) provides a helpful list of things to consider as teachers look around their classrooms from a student's perspective (Figure 3.1).

#### Learning Partners

1. Partners silently read the first section of Classroom Review from the Perspective of a MLL/ELL Student.
2. As you read, take note of things you have in place in your classroom now and things you would like to change or add.
3. When you have both finished reading the section, each person will share their notes, giving specific examples.
4. Continue to read and share throughout the reading, reviewing one section at a time.

#### Classroom Review from the Perspective of a MLL/ELL

##### Written Language (on charts, the board, poster, word walls)

- Is the written language supported with pictures, photos, examples, or graphic organizers that would give you clues to understanding the content?
- Does the written language include familiar words that students have been explicitly taught during lessons?
- Can you identify the content area or topic for writing samples posted in the classroom?

##### Vocabulary Development

- Are there any visual resources like word walls, cognate charts, or labels in the classroom that would help you learn important vocabulary words and understand their meaning?
- Are there ways you could meaningfully practice the vocabulary?

##### Resources Available for Reading

- Are the books and other texts at an appropriate level that would help you develop your reading skills in English? Or would you be expected to wait to read in English until you had learned more of the language?

- Are there books in your home language that would help you continue to develop your reading skills?
- Are there books and other texts about topics and people you can relate to?
- Are there resources such as a listening centers or audio books on iPads that would let you listen to the language as you were reading?

#### Resources Available for Writing

- Are there resources available that would help you start writing in the new language (modeled writing displayed on charts, word walls, bilingual dictionaries or glossaries, a variety of paper choices)? Or would you be expected to wait to write in English until you had learned more of the language?

#### Spaces for Learning

- Are desks/tables and other areas set up so you can collaborate with your peers in learning English and grade-level content? Or would you be expected to always work alone?

#### Home Language

- Are there any materials or resources available in your home language to help you understand new concepts and build literacy skills?
- Have you been partnered with anyone who speaks your home language?

**Figure 3.1** Classroom review from the perspective of a MLL/ELL student. Adapted from Celic (2009).

Classrooms should be organized in a logical way so that MLL/ELL students can easily navigate the layout so they know where to find information and resources. It is helpful to consider the questions in Figure 3.1 as teachers set up their classrooms at the beginning of the year. Each year, teachers can reflect on what went well and what changes to make to their classroom layout, resources and organization, to provide the optimal space for students to access both language and content.

## Building a Culturally Sustaining Learning Environment<sup>7</sup>

Culturally sustaining pedagogy seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling (Paris, 2014, p. 93). This means that teachers use students’ own backgrounds and knowledge to build bridges to content understandings. To do this, we must create a learning environment where MLL/ELL students feel represented and valued, bringing their cultures into the classroom in a meaningful way. Creating a “culturally sustaining” learning environment isn’t just a benefit for bilingual students, though. Many students come from diverse cultural backgrounds, and *all* students benefit from understanding how their learning relates to different cultures. This means doing more than just celebrating a few multicultural holidays throughout the year; instead, this strategy shares four powerful ways you can make your classroom and instruction more culturally relevant to students. These strategies can also allow for exploration into social justice issues that are relevant to students from diverse backgrounds. The four strategies described below include:

1. Expand the content-area curriculum to include other cultures

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from: *Translanguaging: A CUNY-NYSIEB Guide for Educators* (Celic and Seltzer, 2011).

2. Include multiculturalism in classroom or school displays
3. Write identity texts
4. Choose culturally relevant texts and those on topics of interest to students

Readers should inform their instruction by consulting the [NYSED resources on Social Emotional Learning and the Culturally Responsive–Sustaining Education Framework](#).

### **Expand the content area curriculum to include other cultures**

#### **Social Studies**

The Social Studies curriculum is full of opportunities to make connections to the geography, history, traditions, and governments of other cultures. You can take any learning objective in the Social Studies curriculum and expand it to include connections to other cultures.

#### **Science and Math**

Science and math are more universal subjects across cultures. However, for the science or math concepts you are teaching, you can try to give a real-world application that is culturally relevant to your bilingual students. The most powerful way to do this is to connect the math concepts to a multicultural Social Studies or science unit you are teaching at the same time. You can also explore social justice issues related to science and math. For example, <http://www.radicalmath.org> has examples of math used for social justice issues relevant to students with diverse backgrounds.

### **Include multiculturalism in classroom and school displays**

- When you create a display, think about how you can visually represent the multicultural lens students have been using to learn about a content area topic.
- You can also create a display that shows the multiculturalism present in your classroom. This can be done throughout the school.

### **Write identity texts**

This pedagogical strategy, described in detail by Cummins and Early (2011), has bilingual students create a bilingual text in English *and* their home language as a way to share their cultural and linguistic identities and experiences. As Cummins explains: “Students invest their identities in the creation of these texts which can be written, spoken, visual, musical, dramatic, or combinations in multimodal form. The identity text then holds a mirror up to students in which their identities are reflected back in a positive light. When students share identity texts with multiple audiences (peers, teachers, parents, grandparents, sister classes, the media, etc.) they are likely to receive positive feedback and affirmation of self in interaction with these audiences” (Cummins & Early, 2011, p.3).

To create bilingual identity texts, students begin by creating initial drafts in whichever language they choose, typically the language in which they have a stronger writing ability. This allows them to more freely express their ideas and their identities. Then, they work with a peer or an adult to create a translation of the text into the other language. You can even have students create *digital* identity texts by using digital audio recorders and cameras.

### **Choose culturally relevant texts**

It is especially important for teachers of MLLs/ELLs to ensure their instruction takes place within NYSED's [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#) across all grades. Krashen (2004) points out that the more people read, the more their reading comprehension will improve and the more capable they will be of reading from a variety of genres, including academic content texts. MLL/ELL students read more and are supported in literacy when engaged with texts that connect to their cultural backgrounds. They find these books meaningful, and they have a real purpose to read them.

Research shows that students read better and read more when they read culturally relevant books (Ebe 2015, 2012, 2010; Feger 2006; Goodman 1982; Rodriguez 2009). Developing a collection of culturally relevant texts takes a concentrated effort. Not all books about Spanish speakers, for example, are relevant to all Latino students (Rosario and Cao 2015). Some books merely perpetuate stereotypes. Others, especially those published in Spain, contain settings and events that are unfamiliar to most Latino students in the United States. Still other books contain fairy tales. Keep in mind that the more relevant the books are, the greater your bilingual students' reading comprehension and engagement will be. Incorporating culturally relevant texts in your teaching helps your bilingual students draw upon their background knowledge, or schema, to comprehend what they are reading. These texts are also a powerful way to validate and celebrate the cultural experiences of the students in your class, while improving their literacy skills.

To learn more about adapting content-area curricula and lessons for MLLs/ELLs, please visit NYSED's [English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner Educator Tools and Best Practices](#).

## **Part IV. Strategies to support MLL/ELL student learning**

This section of the guide provides practical assistance on strategies that help facilitate more effective learning of content and language by bilingual students. The strategies outlined in this section are intended to foster the use of multiple languages in the classroom and is adapted from Celic and Seltzer, 2011 and Hesson, Seltzer and Woodley, 2014.

In this guide, the strategies described are aligned to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (2017) with explanations of how bilingual strategies can be used to help students access, meet, and even exceed grade level standards in different content areas. While there are many strategies teachers can use to support their students, the strategies in this section include Multilingual Collaborative Work, Vocabulary, Using Students' Home Languages in Reading and Writing and Preview/View/Review. As teachers read through each strategy and classroom examples, they can select a few to try in their classrooms. To learn more about strategies to support MLL/ELL student learning, please see [OBEWL English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner Educator Resources](#).

### **Multilingual Collaborative Work: Content Area**

Multilingual collaborative work is a great opportunity for bilingual students to engage in use of multiple languages as they make sense of new content and produce written and creative work to demonstrate their learning. Group work allows all students, no matter their proficiency in a new language, to be active participants in making sense of content and building on each other's knowledge. In monolingual environments, bilingual students are at a distinct disadvantage as they are unable to draw on *all* of their background knowledge and are unable to share their bilingual thinking

process with others. On the other hand, bilingual students, given the opportunity to work together bilingually, have the benefit of making sense of new, challenging content with all the resources available to them. By giving MLL/ELL students the opportunity to contribute to their group in multiple languages, we increase the amount and the complexity of their participation.

The chart below provides an illustration of this strategy in use through short classroom vignettes from different grade levels. These vignettes are linked to the New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards (2017). These charts help make the point that without translanguageing, many students will be left behind as they are presented with fast-paced, English only units and rigorous new standards.

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 5SL1b:</p> <p>Follow agreed-upon norms for discussions and carry out assigned roles</p>	<p><b>Elementary school</b></p> <p>In a 5<sup>th</sup> grade science class, students are grouped strategically for their final projects. In one group, 4 Spanish speaking students with varying English proficiency levels take on different roles and present their findings bilingually. In another group, two students speak Bengali while two speak French. Some parts of the project are done collaboratively in English, while other parts are completed by partnerships in their respective home languages</p>	<p>Because groups are sensitive to students' linguistic abilities, all students are able to meet the NGLS standard of following the discussion rules and taking on a role. Without such support, some students may not be able to participate in these ways.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 7SL1a</p> <p>Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</p>	<p><b>Middle school</b></p> <p>In a 7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies unit on The Civil War, students visit the New York Historical Society to learn about the contributions of African Americans. Students are paired by home language and take notes at the exhibit using a teacher-made graphic organizer. They then use their notes in a class discussion the following day. Students' notes are written and later shared in English, but students discuss and negotiate what they write in their home language.</p>	<p>Consulting with a partner as they take notes bolsters academic vocabulary in both languages and increases overall comprehension of the material. Collaborating with a partner allows all students to prepare for the class discussion regardless of language ability.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 11-12W6</p>	<p><b>High school</b></p>	<p>Working together to find bilingual resources helps keep students on track as they</p>



Conduct research through self-generated question, or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate. Synthesize multiple sources, demonstrating understanding and analysis of the subject under investigation.	In an 11 <sup>th</sup> grade ENL class, students who share a home language work together to find bilingual resources in that language for their final project. Students are then able to support each other as they synthesize their various sources in multiple languages in writing and present their findings to the class.	navigate large amounts of information that may not be comprehensible to the teacher (unless she speaks that language). Using bilingual resources increases the complexity of material available to all students, which enriches student writing and class discussions.
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### Multilingual Collaborative Work: Reading Groups

In guided reading, independent reading, or literature circles, students can work in groups based on home languages. MLL/ELL students are encouraged to discuss what they read in their home languages, share multilingual texts with group members, and draw on texts in English for support of their ideas in home languages. Students taking on various group roles can use both their home language and English in different ways. Some roles for students in multilingual reading groups can be:

- Discussion leader: prompts group with discussion questions in home language or new language
- Recorder: takes notes during the discussion in home language or English
- Artist: adds visual interpretation of discussion to be shared with whole class
- Translator: translates main points of a home language discussion into English to be shared with whole class
- Taskmaster: keeps group on task, on time, and on topic, providing directions and support in home language or English

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 4RF3</p> <p>Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.</p> <p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 4RF4</p> <p>Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.</p>	<p><b>Elementary School</b></p> <p>In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade literature circles, students take on different roles and read books in home language groups: <i>Hair/Pelitos</i> (Cisneros), <i>Grandfather Counts</i> (Cheng), <i>The Hundred Dresses</i> (Estes), <i>Baseball Saved Us</i> (Mochizuki), <i>Celebrating Families</i> (Hausherr), <i>An-Ya and Her Diary</i> (Christian). In each group, students take turns reading aloud in English, but stop periodically to summarize, ask and answer questions of each other, and discuss opinions in their home language.</p>	<p>1. By working in home language literature circles, students can develop decoding and phonics skills in English with collaborative translanguaging supports. In taking turns reading aloud, students practice fluency.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 7SL1</p>	<p><b>Middle School</b></p> <p>Before starting a new class novel, <i>A Long</i></p>	<p>Multilingual reading groups provide spaces</p>

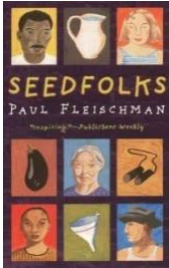
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	<i>Water to Water</i> by Linda Sue Park, students in a 7 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA class work in home language reading groups to preview the book. They find and discuss home language translations of anchor concepts and discuss in home languages their inferences about the book based on the title, cover art, chapter or book title, blurbs or multilingual reviews.	for students to develop collaboration and discussion skills such as accountable talk, consensus, debate, questioning, and teamwork. This, in turn, leads them to more complex understandings of grade level texts in English.
NYS Next Generation ELA: 9-10R1  Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	<b>High School</b> Students in 10 <sup>th</sup> grade American Literature class are reading <i>The Dew Breaker</i> by Edwidge Danticat. The complex relationships in the books are interesting but can be challenging to follow. In home language reading groups, students read and discuss the details of the story while maintaining an ongoing reference multilingual guide to characters and their relationships with each other. Images with home language text such as webs of connection between characters, or family trees, are useful for students to visualize relationships with characters and event details, and students use them as reference for continued reading and writing.	Multilingual reading groups allow MLL/ELL students to draw a quote or passage from the English text then analyze characters or events in their home language using textual evidence as support.

### Multilingual Collaborative Work: Writing Partners

MLL/ELL students need support to move from spoken language to reading and writing in that language. You can pair students strategically so that they help one another grow as writers in English and their home language. As they have multilingual conversations about their writing, students practice using language for academic purposes, hone their listening skills, and talk about text and language in authentic ways.

Writing partners can:

- Brainstorm in any language & write in English
- Jointly construct a piece of writing in English, with discussion and negotiation in any language
- Read a partner's writing in English and discuss revisions and edits in any language
- Work together to translate one another's writing (from tEnglish to home language & vice versa).

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 2W2</p> <p>Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.</p>	<p><b>Elementary School</b></p> <p>In a unit on communities, 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are partnered to compare/contrast, brainstorm, and jointly create a piece of writing as well as prepare an oral presentation. The teacher pairs up two students who are both between an emerging and transitioning proficiency level in English. They work together to write a text in English, combining their linguistic knowledge to express their ideas (see pages 31-40 for more on this unit).</p>	<p>Pairing students who speak a common home language helps them pool their linguistic resources to create a more complex piece of writing. As students work together in both languages, they learn from one another and can work towards creating grade-level work in a new language.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 8W3</p> <p>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details and well-structured event sequences.</p>	<p><b>Middle School</b></p> <p>8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA students read the book <i>Seedfolks</i> by Paul Fleischman. In order to compare different perspectives on the migrant experience, students work in pairs to develop imagined narratives via Two-Voice Poems. Because there are both Spanish- and English-speaking characters, the teacher pairs a Spanish-speaking student with a student who speaks English. The pair write back and forth in two languages, adding lines in the perspective of different characters.</p> 	<p>By pairing students with different home languages, they can create narratives that are rich and complex. By enabling each student to draw from his or her strengths, the pair both learns from and supports one another through the writing process. This is especially useful when reading a text that contains both English and students' home languages.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 11-12W2</p>	<p><b>High School</b></p> <p>Pairs of students in an 11<sup>th</sup> grade Chemistry class edit a formal report written on the results of an in-class lab. Though the reports</p>	<p>Just because a text is produced in English does not mean that the writing process can't be carried out in multiple languages. In fact, giving students the opportunity</p>

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.	are written in English, the two students discuss their ideas for revision in their shared languages, Arabic and French. The students discuss both linguistic and content-related revisions, helping one another to improve the overall quality of the report.	to use all of their languages to revise, edit, rewrite, and make linguistic and content-related choices will serve to strengthen any piece of writing. By pairing students with a shared home language, students have the added benefit of strengthening their home language literacy skills while improving their writing in English.
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### Multilingual Collaborative Work: Reading Partners

MLL/ELL students often learn informal language before achieving proficiency in academic literacy. Below is a chart that reviews some of the differences between each type of language acquisition which were also discussed in Section II of this guide.

Informal Language Skills	Academic Literacy Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly refer to speaking and listening for everyday purposes of communication</li> <li>Could also include basic reading and writing skills such as identifying items by label in a grocery store or writing a short note to a friend.</li> <li>Typically acquired before academic literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More complex and challenging</li> <li>Require abilities such as understanding, synthesizing, evaluating, analyzing, and critiquing academic content</li> <li>Include ability to read and understand, as well as speak and write language for academic purposes</li> <li>Typically take longer to acquire</li> <li>Students with academic literacy in their home language typically acquire academic literacy in an additional language more easily.</li> </ul>

**Figure 4.1** Informal language skills and academic literacy.

Assigning reading partners is a simple yet effective strategy to help students transition from informal everyday language use to complex academic literacy. Reading partners support literacy development in other ways:

- Students develop trusting relationships, allowing them to make mistakes and grapple with difficult material.
- Using a shared home language allows students to work through unknown vocabulary and complex text.
- Each student's individual strengths contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the text.

Reading the same text in both English and the home language with a partner allows for cross-linguistic transfer where linguistic knowledge from one language is used to leverage the learning of another language. This increases participation for beginner English learners. Even if students are reading different books, multilingual reading partners are a useful academic support. During class, reading

partners can help each other make sense of difficult concepts. At the end of each class, students can report back to each other on what they read using both languages.

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 3R1</p> <p>Develop and answer questions to locate relevant and specific details in a text to support an answer or inference.</p>	<p><b>Elementary school</b></p> <p>To prepare for a Science unit on the rock cycle, students in a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELA class read background material with reading partners in their home languages. Together, the students carried out many tasks, including answering one another's questions about academic vocabulary and new content and comparing notes to check for understanding.</p>	<p>Asking and answering questions with a multilingual reading partner increases comprehension of complex material and gives students more opportunities to meet the standard.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 6R4</p> <p>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning, tone, and mood, including words with multiple meanings.</p>	<p><b>Middle school</b></p> <p>During a memoir unit in a 6<sup>th</sup> grade ELA class, French-speaking students in the class read the original French book alongside the English version. Bilingual reading partners grapple with metalinguistic questions such as, does the book have a different feel in English and French? Is anything lost in translation? Do certain words, scenes, or characters work better in one language than the other? Did you find any cognates? How did reading both versions enhance your experience?</p>	<p>Bilingual partners may look at sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or sections in side-by-side translations to analyze how they fit into the structure of the text overall, as well as how they work differently in different languages.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 11-12R2</p> <p>Determine two or more themes or central ideas in a text and analyze their development, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details; objectively and accurately summarize a complex text.</p>	<p><b>High school</b></p> <p>In a 12<sup>th</sup> grade American History class, reading partners read primary and secondary source documents about present day Navajo life. Then reading partners seek out a blog written by someone with their shared cultural background and/or home language. While reading the blogs, reading partners help each other identify themes across blogs and summarize their findings.</p>	<p>Students are able to practice the skill of summary and finding key details in their home language, and through bilingual discussion navigate the meaning of the text.</p>

## Vocabulary

### Multilingual Word Walls


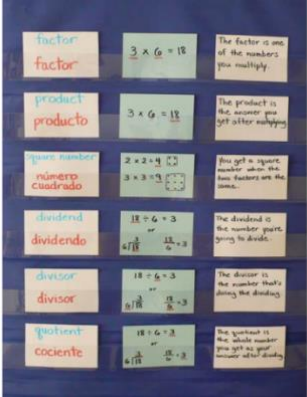
Multilingual Word Walls provide opportunities for MLLs/ELLs and English proficient students to visually engage with words and learn new vocabulary. The visual display can be created using a variety of materials and formats including:


- Word cards side-by-side in multiple languages
- Pockets with the target word displayed on the front, and several word cards in the pocket.  
Inside the pocket can be:
  - Synonyms or “stronger words” in the target and home languages
  - Cognates or “word friends” in home languages (see Section I of this guide and Funk’s (2012) *Languages of New York*)
  - Definitions or translations in students’ home languages
- Target word with definitions in students’ home language(s)
- Target word with a context sentence in students’ home language(s)

The real power of a Multilingual Word Wall is in students’ continuous engagement with it. Students can be responsible for updating the wall with their various languages. In class, students can use the Multilingual Word Wall in diverse ways including:

- Writing fictional short stories or poetry incorporating words on the wall.
- Creating and playing games using words: crossword puzzles, charades, Pictionary, etc.
- Using Word Wall words as choices for word study, writing prompts, personal dictionaries, and other independent or collaborative learning activities.



Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to Bridge to NYS NGLS
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 3L4</p> <p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p>	<p>Elementary</p>  <p>A Multilingual Word Wall in a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom consists of new content vocabulary in the new language and student home languages, a visual of the word and a sentence that uses the word. Students, families and school staff help to build the home language portion of the wall, and visuals are made or found by students.</p>	<p>Students can use multilingual word walls as reference throughout a unit. As students work on a task independently or in small groups, and come across a word they do not know, they can physically go up to the word wall, and consult with both the home language translation of words and the visual guide. Students can also work to create the multilingual word wall with the help of the school and local community.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 6L4</p> <p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies</p>	<p>Middle School</p> <p>In a 6<sup>th</sup> grade math class, common math words are on a Multilingual Word Wall. This includes the word in English and home languages, an example in math terms and a brief definition of the word. Students refer to the word wall as they engage in problem-solving, creating their own problems, whole class discussions and collaborative and independent work. The teacher stresses the technical meaning of the words in Math but also discusses other meanings. For example, “product” can also be used in a sentence such as “Milk is a dairy product.”</p> 	<p>Students in content area classes often use words that have multiple meanings, including technical and figurative meanings. This can make vocabulary learning an even more complex process for MLLs/ELLs. Multilingual word walls provide space to display multiple meanings of words for students to explore as a reference in their classroom, and also be active participants in the creation of this resource, strengthening their understanding of new concepts.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 11-12R4</p>		<p>Multilingual word walls can be created and used while reading a multilingual text, and can reflect various meanings of individual</p>

<p>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning, tone, and mood, including words with multiple meanings. Analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of technical or key term(s) over the course of a text.</p>	<p><b>High School</b> Using Arabic, Farsi, Pashtun, English, the author of <i>The Kite Runner</i> weaves different languages through characters' dialogue and narration. This multilingualism is reflected in an 11<sup>th</sup> grade ELA Multilingual Word Wall, which displays multilingual words as they appear in the novel. Students create a home language definition or explanation card to accompany each displayed word and copy the sentence in which it appears onto the card, identifying whether the word is being used connotatively or figuratively. As students continue reading, they use the word wall as reference, and also in their writing as language from the novel is incorporated as textual evidence.</p> 	<p>words. As students actively engage in creating the word wall, they are immersed in the language of the text and take ownership over a resource that will be used by the whole class throughout the unit. As students continue reading a text, or working on a theme, they can consult the multilingual word wall for various figurative and connotative meanings of unknown words.</p>
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## Cognate Charts

As described in Section I of this guide, cognates are words that look and/or sound similar across different languages. For example, the word *night* in English has many cognates in other languages, including Afrikaans (*nag*), Polish (*noc*), German (*nacht*), French (*nuite*), Spanish (*noche*), and Ukrainian (*nich*), amongst many others. English shares many cognates with other Indo-European languages, but less so with other language families, such as African and Asian language families. Cognate charts are a way to display cognates in the classroom for word study and as an ongoing reference. Cognate charts may focus on:

### Content-specific academic vocabulary

English	French	Spanish	Russian
conservation	conservation de la nature	conservación	сохранение

### General academic vocabulary used across content areas

English	Polish	Turkish	Haitian Creole
energy	energia	enerji	enèji

### Root words related to unit of study

Root	Meaning	Origin	English example	Spanish example
aud	hear	Latin	audible	audible

Use cognate charts in your classroom to:

- Introduce the key vocabulary of the unit.

- Encourage students to note cognates as they read independently in either language. Encourage ALL students to look and listen for cognates in each other's bilingual presentations even if they don't speak the same home language.

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 5L4</p> <p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p>	<p><b>Elementary school</b></p> <p>In a 5<sup>th</sup> grade bilingual Science class, the teacher keeps a list of cognates of key vocabulary related to their unit on the environment posted on chart paper in the classroom. Students use the chart to build their bilingual vocabulary as well as to create bilingual presentations on the local environment for their communities.</p>	<p>Explicitly showing students the connection between vocabulary in multiple languages increases students' transfer of knowledge between languages.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 7L4b</p> <p>Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel).</p>	<p><b>Middle school</b></p> <p>In a 7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies class, the teacher regularly asks students to make connections between new English vocabulary and vocabulary in their home languages based on common Greek and Latin roots. The activity is a classroom competition, where each table wins points for recognizing cognates in their home languages.</p>	<p>Embedding the activity into the daily routine helps students to make a habit of drawing on their multiple languages to strengthen their understanding of the material. The social aspect of the activity celebrates the multilingual skills of the students and encourages collaboration.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 9-10L4b</p> <p>Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., analyze, analysis, analytical; advocate, advocacy).</p>	<p><b>High school</b></p> <p>In a high school ENL class, students engage in a word study exercise in which they list some typical prefixes and suffixes in English and their home language for adjectives, adverbs, gerunds, nouns, etc. Some English examples include -ing, -tion, -ful, -ly, -er, -ble, in-, un-, pre-, etc. Students then note correspondences between languages (for example, erosion - English and érosion - French).</p>	<p>Noting commonalities and patterns between prefixes and suffixes in multiple languages builds students' flexibility between languages as they come to better understand corresponding patterns based on part of speech.</p>

## Preview/ View/ Review

Freeman et al. (2016) discuss the strategy Preview-View-Review (PVR), which uses both the new language and students' home languages to build background and read texts/introduce new topics. This strategy has three parts:

- Preview the topic/text in the *home language*  
This includes brainstorming, making connections, and sharing prior knowledge on the topic/text you are about to explore. For example, you can have students engage in *home language conversations and brainstorm*s with peers, school staff, and family members, or provide students with *graphic organizers* such as K-W-L charts and Anticipation Guides, which students can complete using all their language resources.
- View the topic/text in the *new language* while connecting to the home language preview  
Here, students are presented with the lesson/content topic in the new, or target language (this is often English, but in dual language bilingual programs this could be another language). The presentation of content can include a traditional mini-lesson, a hands-on activity, watching a video clip or listening to audio, or reading a text either independently, in partnerships/groups, or aloud as a whole class. Here you can make explicit connections between what students previewed in their home language and new content they are learning in the new language.
- Review the topic/text *in the home language and back to the new language*  
This includes discussing, summarizing, and analyzing the text/topic back in the home language and through the use of multiple languages. This step helps MLLs/ELLs to clarify and negotiate what they learned in English, solidifying their understanding of the content. Students can review with a partner or group, staff members who share their home languages, or family members.

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
NYS Next Generation ELA: 3RF4 Read grade-level text with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension	<b>Elementary School</b> During a unit on analyzing the use of humor in literature, students read different books in literature circles. The teacher introduces new literacy skills by having students <i>preview</i> each skill with a short, home language text. She then gives a short mini-lesson in which students <i>view</i> the skill in action with an English text. Afterwards, students <i>review</i> the new skill as they discuss their own books in their home languages and make links to the English language texts.	The use of explicit reading strategies can aid in comprehension. If students can practice a reading strategy in the language they know best, they are more likely to incorporate that strategy into their reading in a new language like English, leading to better comprehension.
NYS Next Generation Math: 6G1 Find area of triangles, trapezoids, and other polygons by composing into rectangles or decomposing into triangles and quadrilaterals. Apply these techniques in the context of solving real-world and mathematical problems.	<b>Middle School</b> To <i>preview</i> a geometry unit that will be taught in English, a 6 <sup>th</sup> grade Dual Language Bilingual math teacher shows a short video in French that illustrates geometry at work in the real world. After watching the French video, the teacher gives students a brief introduction to different shapes	Seeing a film in their home languages about math helps students make connections between the real world and new academic content. Because students are introduced to these

	they will be exploring in the unit ( <i>view</i> ). Then students talk with their partners in French and brainstorm different places they've seen each shape in their own neighborhoods ( <i>review</i> ) while naming the shapes also in English. This preview exercise builds students' bilingual academic vocabulary and facilitates the transfer of knowledge between languages.	ideas in one of their home languages, they are better prepared to solve real-world math problems about triangles in a new language.
NYS Next Generation ELA: 9-10R7  Analyze how a subject / content is presented in two or more formats by determining which details are emphasized, altered, or absent in each account. (e.g., analyze the representation of a subject / content or key scene in two different formats, examine the differences between a historical novel and a documentary).	<b>High School</b> A 9 <sup>th</sup> grade science teacher prepares his MLLs/ELLs for a unit on evolution. He uses Google Translate to put together an Anticipation Guide in both Spanish and English to <i>preview</i> key ideas within the unit. (Remember that items translated through Google Translate need to be reviewed by the teacher before presenting it to the students.) Students read the statements and discuss whether they agree or disagree with the statement, recording their opinions, using all their language resources. The teacher revisits students' answers throughout the unit.	Previewing concepts in home languages helps students compare/contrast their own knowledge of new topics with what they learn throughout a unit. By expressing and rationalizing their opinions of a topic in their home language, students are more able to support/contradict those opinions when learning content in a new language.

## Using Students' Home Languages in Reading & Writing

### Multilingual Research

One of the advantages of knowing multiple languages is that you can use all of them to acquire information. When bilingual students research a topic using their *entire* linguistic repertoire, they experience the real-life value of being multilingual.

Multilingual research gives students:

- Access to *more information*
- Opportunities to see the world from *multiple perspectives*
- Connections to *background knowledge* about their current learning in their home languages
- Opportunities to develop *reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills* in multiple languages

When planning a research-based unit, consider:

- Collecting sources in multiple languages through the Internet, books from the public library, radio and podcasts
- Assigning student groups so that where possible, students have language partners to work with.

- Having students research by moving through thematic stations in small groups, taking notes in multiple languages on an assigned topic (ex. In a unit of study on Iroquois, topics may be Food, Governance, Family, etc.).
- Encouraging students to use their own multilingual research to inform their final project.

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS						
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 4R6</p> <p>In literary texts, compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first - and third - person narrations. In informational texts, compare and contrast a primary and secondary source on the same event or topic.</p>	<p><b>Elementary school</b></p> <p>In a 4<sup>th</sup> grade unit on Native Americans, students' research Iroquois life through <b>texts in multiple languages</b>, including informational texts, graphics and multimedia, Iroquois legends, and historical fiction stories.</p>	<p>Researching one topic in multiple languages will enrich students' understanding of the topic by offering complex information while building students' additional languages.</p>						
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 7W6</p> <p>Conduct research to answer questions, including self- generated questions, drawing on multiple sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. Generate additional related questions for further research and investigation.</p>	<p><b>Middle school</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="630 1083 1000 1306"> <tr> <td>Text Excerpt</td><td>Write it in your own words (home language)</td><td>Write it in your own words (English)</td></tr> <tr> <td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table> <p>Students <b>do multilingual research</b> about the Second Sudanese Civil War for a 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA historical fiction unit. Teachers provide a list of multilingual sources, and students find their own independently. Then, students create a multilingual graphic organizer by recording a text excerpt in the language it was written, followed by an explanation in their own words in both their home language and English.</p>	Text Excerpt	Write it in your own words (home language)	Write it in your own words (English)				<p>Writing about a text excerpt in the home language before explaining it in English gives students a bridge to help them make sense of new, complex information. This exercise also allows students to build their knowledge of the topic as well as increase their fluency in both languages.</p>
Text Excerpt	Write it in your own words (home language)	Write it in your own words (English)						
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 9-10R7</p>	<p><b>High school</b></p> <p>In a 9<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies unit, students <b>create primary source</b></p>	<p>This activity goes beyond the standard by having students not only compare two points</p>						



Analyze how a subject / content is presented in two or more formats by determining which details are emphasized, altered, or absent in each account. (e.g., analyze the representation of a subject / content or key scene in two different formats, examine the differences between a historical novel and a documentary).	<b>documents</b> by doing multilingual interviews of classmates, family members, and community members about their own refugee experiences. Students take notes during interviews in both their home languages and English. They then analyze each other's interviews, comparing and contrasting the information gathered, and incorporating these documents into a larger analysis of refugee experience.	of view, but actually creating the primary source documents they will compare. This offers students a greater understanding of primary sources as well as a deeper, personal connection to the material itself.
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### Comparing Multilingual Texts

Engaging with multilingual texts for comparison provides space for bilingual students to read rigorous texts in their home languages, and critically evaluate language, content, and structures of diverse texts and mediums. Working independently or in either home language pairs/groups or linguistically diverse pairs/groups, students can compare multilingual texts in a variety of ways, such as:

- Comparing a text in English and the same text translated into students' home language(s).
- Comparing two different texts about the same topic or theme, one originally written in English and one originally written in a student's home language(s).
- Comparing two different texts on the same topic or theme in two different mediums (i.e. a newspaper article and an online video) that are also in two different languages.

When working in pairs/groups with monolingual students or classmates with other home languages, MLL/ELL students can teach or translate texts from their home languages, practicing summarizing skills and strengthening their own comprehension.

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
NYS Next Generation ELA: 5R5  In informational texts, compare and contrast the overall structure in two or more texts using terms such as sequence, comparison, cause/effect, and problem/solution.	<b>Elementary School</b> Students in a 5 <sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies class work in pairs to create multilingual travel brochures, but don't always share home languages. Each pair finds two texts about their chosen location, one in English and one in a home language of choice. Embassy or national websites, and travel and tourism sites are particularly useful for both multilingual written and visual information. Each partner can teach their text to the other partner, discuss the varying information and language,	Multilingual texts provide ample opportunities for students to compare and contrast language, word choice, structure, content, event details, and more. This particular activity also pushes students to hone their oral language skills as they explain content and comparisons written in their home languages in English.

	and use what they've learned together to create their brochure in English.	
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 7R7</p> <p>Compare and contrast a written text with audio, filmed, staged, or digital versions in order to analyze the effects of techniques unique to each media and each format's portrayal of a subject.</p>	<p><b>Middle School</b></p> <p>In a 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA class, students are exploring making change in their communities. They go out into their communities and gather authentic community materials in multiple languages, such as maps, menus, healthcare pamphlets, and brochures. They choose one in their home language, and then find that information online in English (or choose material in English and go online for home language information). Students then evaluate the two mediums for content, language, and personal preference.</p>	<p>Comparing multilingual texts adds a layer of language for students to use as a springboard for evaluation of two texts. It also opens doors for reading a variety of texts in different media, including authentic community materials and multilingual websites.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 11-12 R7</p> <p>In informational texts, integrate and evaluate sources on the same topic or argument in order to address a question, or solve a problem.</p>	<p><b>High School</b></p> <p>In groups, 11<sup>th</sup> grade chemistry students choose to investigate a communicable disease that interests them. Each group member conducts research through a different medium (online video, magazines, public websites, class textbook) and in at least two different languages. Later the class comes together, teaching onother what they learned from their sources, comparing and evaluating their language and content, and synthesizing learning to create a presentation with visuals to the whole class about their disease.</p>	<p>Working in a group on a topic of choice, students can independently investigate and research in a language and medium of choice, then join together with group members to evaluate and integrate these ideas to address a problem or complete a task.</p>

## Multilingual Reading Responses

When we think more flexibly about how MLL/ELL students can respond to what they read, we can begin to see what these students truly understand. When the pressure of getting the language “right” is alleviated, and when bilingual students utilize their entire linguistic repertoire, they are able to demonstrate their understanding of what they read more successfully. In order for students to respond to what they read in more than one language, teachers must engage in two steps:

1. provide multilingual texts, and
2. create opportunities for students to use multiple languages as they respond to what they read.

Once you have taken these two steps, MLL/ELL students can engage in one or more of the following strategies when reading a text in English:

Respond Orally:

- Discuss the text in English *and* the home language
- Discuss the text in the home language *only*

Respond in Writing:

- Respond to the text in English *and* the home language
- Respond to the text in the home language *only*

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS				
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 3R9</p> <p>Recognize genres and make connections to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations.</p>	<p><b>Elementary School</b></p> <p>During a unit on analyzing the use of humor in literature, MLLs/ELLs participate in literature circles and, as they read, take notes in a Reader Response Journal. Though most of them read books in English, they ask questions, make connections, and analyze the humor in both English and their home languages. For example:</p> <table><tr><th>Moment in the Text</th><th>Reader Response</th></tr><tr><td>A quote, specific moment, or idea from the text (<i>written in English or the language of the text</i>)</td><td>Analysis, questions, connections, etc. about that moment (<i>written in the home language and/or English or the language of the text</i>)</td></tr></table>	Moment in the Text	Reader Response	A quote, specific moment, or idea from the text ( <i>written in English or the language of the text</i> )	Analysis, questions, connections, etc. about that moment ( <i>written in the home language and/or English or the language of the text</i> )	<p>Students find quotes or specific moments in a text that illustrate a central lesson. They elaborate on <i>how</i> the chosen detail illustrates this lesson by writing about it in both their home language and in English. Responding in the home language can help students demonstrate their knowledge without linguistic restrictions.</p>
Moment in the Text	Reader Response					
A quote, specific moment, or idea from the text ( <i>written in English or the language of the text</i> )	Analysis, questions, connections, etc. about that moment ( <i>written in the home language and/or English or the language of the text</i> )					

<p>NYS Next Generation Mathematics NY8G3</p> <p>Describe the effect of dilations, translations, rotations, and reflections on two-dimensional figures using coordinates.</p>	<p><b>Middle School</b></p> <p>An 8<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher creates a classroom poster that lists sentence prompts and gives students copies of the list to keep in their binders. The prompts are in English with side-by-side translations in students’ home language, Spanish. In groups, students can use the home language prompts to discuss their work. When sharing out their work with the whole class, however, students use the English prompts. This structure helps students develop their language for academic purposes in both English and Spanish.</p> <table><tr><td><b>I still don’t get...</b></td><td><b>Todavía no sé...</b></td></tr><tr><td>Can you show how you...?</td><td>¿Puedes demostrar cómo...?</td></tr><tr><td>I figured out...</td><td>Me di cuenta que...</td></tr></table>	<b>I still don’t get...</b>	<b>Todavía no sé...</b>	Can you show how you...?	¿Puedes demostrar cómo...?	I figured out...	Me di cuenta que...	<p>As students engage in content area learning, they learn to <i>describe</i> what they are learning using their languages for academic purposes. Thus, students are not only learning new content but talking through their learning in both their home and English.</p>
<b>I still don’t get...</b>	<b>Todavía no sé...</b>							
Can you show how you...?	¿Puedes demostrar cómo...?							
I figured out...	Me di cuenta que...							
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 9-10R2</p> <p>Determine one or more themes or central ideas in a text and analyze its development, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; objectively and accurately summarize a text.</p>	<p><b>High School</b></p> <p>A 10<sup>th</sup> grade bilingual chemistry teacher has his students respond to textbook readings using a series of multilingual graphic organizers (Venn diagrams, four-box organizers, semantic maps, etc.). The textbooks they read are in both English and Spanish, and the teacher always encourages students to respond in either or both languages so that they can better understand the concept.</p>	<p>By responding to what they read using graphic organizers in English or the home language, students can visualize processes, summarize important ideas, and draw conclusions about scientific concepts using their entire linguistic repertoire.</p>						

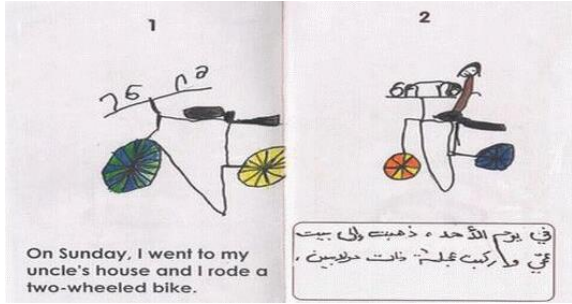
## Independent Writing in Multiple Languages

Students have many experiences with independent writing throughout the school day. In Writers' Workshop, journaling, assessments, reading responses, and more, MLLs/ELLs can draw on their home languages as valuable learning tools during independent work. With independent writing, students can:

- write bilingual texts using both home language and English side by side.
- take notes on a text or synthesize first in home language, then in English.
- write a text in home language first, then, with revisions and bilingual dictionary support, write the final draft in English.
- brainstorm, prewrite, outline, or plan in home languages for an English writing piece.
- write in home languages with some English words within the text (or vice versa).

Text Excerpt	Write it in your own words (home language)	Write it in your own words (English)

Student use of their home languages is a valuable scaffold that can be incorporated into every stage of the writing process, from prewriting to publishing. Teachers can ask students to use their home languages in addition to providing other linguistic supports including sentence frames and sentence starters in both English and students' home languages.

Standard	Multiple Language Use in Action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 3W3</p> <p>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.</p>	<p><b>Elementary School</b></p> <p>Students in Thornwood Elementary School's multilingual Dual Language Showcase create bilingual side-by-side texts in English and their home languages. These stories are written independently, with all language chosen by students. Parents and teachers in the school support the home language writing, and the work is shared online for the larger community.</p> <p><a href="http://schools.peelschools.org">http://schools.peelschools.org</a></p>  <p>Raina, Thornwood Elementary School, Toronto</p>	<p>Providing space for use of multiple languages allows MLLs/ELLs to apply literacy skills of story development, details, and event sequencing to their creative writing. These writing skills can be utilized in English and can strengthen students' biliteracy.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 7W2</p> <p>Write informative/</p>	<p><b>Middle School</b></p> <p>In 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA, bilingual students write first drafts of persuasive letters in their home languages. The teacher gives out and reviews a</p>	<p>Providing space for home languages in independent writing is a valuable tool in engaging students in writing</p>


<p>explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <p>With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing or rewriting.</p>	<p>bilingual rubric for their letter. She asks them to find someone whose opinion they trust, and either read aloud their letter, or have this person read it. Student partners then fill out the rubric, which is used in revisions for the final, English version of the letter.</p>	<p>partnerships. Students have greater access to a multitude of perspectives and supports for revising their writing when sharing in their home languages.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 11-12 R7</p> <p>In informational texts, integrate and evaluate sources on the same topic or argument in order to address a question, or solve a problem.</p>	<p><b>High School</b> Students in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade Global History class are preparing to write a document-based question (DBQ) essay. They are given two primary source documents, a photograph of a plantation and a diary page written by Harriet Tubman. They are then asked a question to be answered in essay form. As they examine and read the documents, they make notes in the margins in their home languages. They then brainstorm ideas for their writing in both English and home languages. They use their home language brainstorming and prewriting to craft their DBQ essay response in English. Bilingual dictionaries or online translation tools are also available to support students' independent writing.</p>	<p>Home languages are useful for helping students prepare to address a complex task such as comparing and contrasting texts. Students can use multiple languages to flesh out their ideas and explore these texts, then write more complex responses in the new language.</p>

## Multi-genre Writing in Multiple Languages

Multi-genre writing offers students the opportunity to showcase their skills and knowledge in a variety of ways. For MLL/ELL students, and for many students who struggle with literacy, formal writing assignments may not fully illustrate their understanding of a topic. Using academic vocabulary, writing complex sentences, and organizing and developing ideas on the page are just a few stumbling blocks your students may face. By writing in multiple genres, students can write about their knowledge in different ways, helping you get a better idea of what they know and can do. Some genres may include: letter-writing, poetry, oral (video-recorded) and written interviews, labeled dioramas/models, plays, art/music reviews, brochures, or TV scripts. Encouraging students to use language flexibly with these multiple genres has many benefits:

- Students are able to develop an authentic writing voice that includes all of their language abilities.
- Students are able to write for wider audiences, including their peers, families, and communities.
- Students have the opportunity to write about their knowledge in the language they feel most comfortable and competent using.
- Students are encouraged to explore how language affects point of view and understanding.



Standard	Multiple Language Use in action	Bridge to NYS NGLS
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 3W1</p> <p>Write an argument to support claim(s), using clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p>	 <p><b>Elementary school</b></p> <p>In a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade unit on Persuasive Essay, students use a <b>bilingual graphic organizer</b> to think through their ideas on paper before creating a brochure on “The Best Place in the World.” Students then use this brochure to write a persuasive essay on the topic. Using a bilingual graphic organizer has many benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gives students the opportunity to use richer vocabulary in their home language as they develop English</li> <li>▪ Allows side by side comparison of grammatical structures</li> <li>▪ Helps organize students’ thoughts before writing</li> </ul>	<p>Using a bilingual graphic organizer serves as a stepping stone to writing in multiple genres in both English and students’ home languages. Further, one organizer can serve as a jumping off point for multiple writing pieces –in this case, a brochure and a persuasive essay.</p>
<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 7W4</p> <p>Create a poem, story, play, artwork, or other response to a text, author, theme, or personal experience</p>	<p><b>Middle school</b></p> <p>In a 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA fiction unit on survival, students use both languages to <b>draft a two-voiced poem</b> based on the survival experiences of 2 characters in the unit. Depending on students’ abilities and preferences, they may keep their poems bilingual or translate them into one language. In a bilingual classroom, students may write one voice in English and the other in the home language. Then, students turn their poems into performances with a partner.</p>	<p>Writing bilingually helps all students meet the standard of producing a clear and coherent piece of writing. Knowing that the poems will be performed, students keep the purpose and audience in mind as they craft their poems.</p>

<p>NYS Next Generation ELA: 9-10SL4</p> <p>Present claims, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically; organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p>	<p><b>High school</b></p> <p>In a 10<sup>th</sup> grade Living Environment unit, students <b>create model ecosystems</b> that demonstrate how the diversity of living things contributes to the stability of an ecosystem. Students label their ecosystems bilingually, then orally explain their models in either language using a digital recorder. Oral responses are presented to the class along with the model. Students may also present their work to the school on Earth Day, at a science fair, during Parent Teacher conferences, etc.</p>	<p>This project allows students to complete the standard in terms of clearly presenting their findings. Using digital recorders allows students to practice their speech, increasing fluency and reducing anxiety.</p>
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## Conclusion

The focus of this guide is to provide essential information and strategies to support MLLs/ELLs. It begins with practical ideas for getting to know students and to understand where they are on the continuum of language learning. It describes how to design instruction so that MLL/ELLs are at the center. Finally, the guide provides specific strategies teachers can incorporate into their teaching in order to facilitate the use of students' home languages as resources for learning. Through the use of this guide, educators are positioned to lead MLL/ELLs toward school success.



## Appendix

The following acronyms are referred to throughout the guide:

### **CUNY-NYSIEB**

City University of New York – New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals

<b>ELA</b>	English Language Arts
<b>MLL</b>	Multilingual Learner
<b>ELL</b>	English Language Learner
<b>ENL</b>	English as a New Language. Formerly know English as a Second Language (ESL)
<b>IEP</b>	Individualized Education Plan
<b>LOTE</b>	Language Other than English
<b>LTE</b>	Long-term English Language Learner
<b>NLA</b>	Native Language Arts
<b>NGLS</b>	Next Generation Learning Standards
<b>SIFE</b>	Students with Interrupted Formal Education

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