ESL Grade 7 – 8 Oral Profiles

Step A1 (TDSB)

At the end of Step A1, students can understand and respond to simple English communication and classroom routines when supported by non-verbal strategies such as gestures, body language, facial expressions and other supportive visual cues. They can use these same strategies themselves in order to make themselves understood. They are watchful, absorbing language and observing the new environment. Students benefit from a learning environment that includes routines and activities that are provided in highly visual contexts, and a teacher who listens attentively, speaks slowly and clearly, monitors for student understanding, rephrases when necessary, and allows extra time for processing. Students continue to rely on their first language (L1) for listening and speaking. They are beginning to understand a few basic spoken English words and phrases and are ready to start using single English words.

Step 1

At the end of Step 1, students can understand and respond to simple English communication in highly-structured situations when supported by strategies such as the use of visuals, realia and manipulatives, teacher modelling, and student-generated bilingual word lists. They communicate personal needs, information and ideas using words, phrases and simple patterned sentences, non-verbal communication, and/or their first language (L1). They can present ideas and information orally for academic purposes using pre-taught vocabulary in simple, scaffolded classroom activities such as describing a poster or retelling key events from a photo montage in a small group setting. Students benefit from opportunities to practice basic spoken interactions using common social greetings and courtesies, and maintaining appropriate eye contact and volume.

Step 2

At the end of Step 2, students can understand and respond to key information in English, in a classroom environment with visual supports such as multi-lingual anchor charts and word walls. They initiate and engage in structured interactions for social and academic purposes using simple sentences and simple compound sentences, and/or first language (L1). They use pre-taught, subject-specific vocabulary when communicating in English for a variety of purposes in small group and whole class settings. Students benefit from strategies for clarification, and expressions of encouragement, agreement and disagreement in social and academic interactions.

Step 3

At the end of Step 3, students can understand and respond to simplified oral English texts related to content areas and personal topics, with supports such as pre-taught vocabulary, activating prior knowledge and discussing the topic in first language (L1) with a partner. In English, they communicate ideas and information using compound sentences. Students use an expanded range of key academic vocabulary in small and whole group settings. They still require support using conversational strategies to maintain fluency.

Step 4

At the end of Step 4, students can understand and respond to linguistically complex oral English texts with supports such as closed captioning, note-taking outlines, and Think-Pair-Share. They can communicate ideas and information using complex, linked sentences, low-frequency and subject-specific vocabulary. Students can paraphrase information and use a variety of strategies to initiate and maintain conversations and discussions. They still require speaking prompts to express opinion in academic contexts.

Step 5

At the end of Step 5, students can understand and respond to oral English texts that include linguistically complex topics with vocabulary and grammar support. They communicate ideas and information, using a variety of sentences and a range of subject-specific terms, descriptive vocabulary and some figurative language. Students can strategically use English for a variety of purposes and audiences. They still require support to develop public speaking skills.

Step 6

At the end of Step 6, students can understand and respond to English used in social, academic, formal and informal situations. They communicate ideas and information, using a range of oral text forms for a wide variety of different purposes and audiences. They use academic vocabulary and a variety of complex sentences and grammatical structures. Students still require support to effectively use idiomatic language and cultural references.