¡Colorín colorado!

ELL Starter Kit for Educators
Tools for Monitoring Language Skills

www.ColorinColorado.org

A partnership of AFT and Reading Rockets

WETA

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

Reading Rockets is a national educational service of public television station WETA and is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.
There are more than 5 million English language learners (ELLs) in U.S. public schools today; these students make up nearly 12 percent of the total public school population. By 2025, most teachers will have had at least one ELL in their classroom, if not a whole roomful. In addition to learning a new language, most ELLs also have to adjust to a new environment and culture, as well as learn new academic skills and new content. This can be a challenge for educators, especially if they have not received prior information, materials, or preparation on how to work with this group of students.

For More Information

We urge educators who have not worked with ELLs previously to seek help and advice from other teachers and paraprofessionals who specialize in English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual education and collaborate with them. These specialized colleagues can be important allies in helping mainstream educators better address the needs of ELL students.

Additional resources can be found at:

www.aft.org/topics/ells/index.htm
www.ColorinColorado.org
www.ReadingRockets.org

www.ColorinColorado.org
Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners
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For More Information

We urge educators who have not worked with ELLs previously to seek help and advice from other teachers and paraeducators who specialize in English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual education and collaborate with them. These specialized colleagues can be important allies in helping mainstream educators better address the needs of ELL students.

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Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners
### Overall Language Performance

This form can help you document the progress of an English language learner. Complete a new form each month to learn about the student’s overall academic progress and gains in English proficiency. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Progress during the past month**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Performance in class on:**

   - Oral comprehension
   - Reading comprehension
   - Completes writing assignments
   - Works independently
   - Asks for help when needed
   - Successful completion of tests and assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Recommendations:** What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

4. **How can these recommendations be accomplished?**

5. **Other:**

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**Forms for Monitoring Language Skills**

- Overall Language Performance
- Oral Communication Skills
- Reading Skills
- Fluency Skills: Expressive Reading
- Use of Comprehension Strategies

**Other Helpful Resources**

- Common Classroom Phrases: Spanish
- Cognates: Similar Spanish-English Words
- Recommended Spanish-English Bilingual Books
- PK-3 Reading Tip Sheets for Parents in 11 Languages

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www.ColorinColorado.org

Helping kids learn to read... and succeed!

A free Web site with information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners.

Sign up for our monthly educator e-newsletter!

[https://www.colorincolorado.org/about/signup.php](https://www.colorincolorado.org/about/signup.php)

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Ready-to-use monthly monitoring forms and more for classroom educators of English language learners

The No Child Left Behind Act requires that meticulous records be kept on the progress of English language learners. Having the following records handy may make it easier for you to respond when questions arise about a student’s placement, special services, and grading.

Forms for Monitoring Language Skills
- Overall Language Performance
- Oral Communication Skills
- Reading Skills
- Fluency Skills: Expressive Reading
- Use of Comprehension Strategies

Other Helpful Resources
- Common Classroom Phrases: Spanish
- Cognates: Similar Spanish-English Words
- Recommended Spanish-English Bilingual Books
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https://www.colorincolorado.org/about/signup.php

www.ColorinColorado.org
Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners


This form can help you document the progress of an English language learner. Complete a new form each month to learn about the student’s overall academic progress and gains in English proficiency. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Progress during the past month
   - Low 2 3 4 5

2. Performance in class on:
   - Oral comprehension 1 2 3 4 5
   - Reading comprehension 1 2 3 4 5
   - Completes writing assignments 1 2 3 4 5
   - Works independently 1 2 3 4 5
   - Asks for help when needed 1 2 3 4 5
   - Successful completion of tests and assessments 1 2 3 4 5

3. Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

4. How can these recommendations be accomplished?

5. Other:
Use this form to document the oral communication skills of an English language learner. Put a checkmark next to the skill level that best describes the student’s abilities. Complete a new form each month to learn about the student’s gains in English proficiency. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

Student's name

Grade

Date

Class

Teacher

Overall communication skills

- Communicates very well in social and academic English
- Communicates with some difficulty but conveys meaning
- Understands English very little or not at all

Vocabulary skills

- Uses content vocabulary
- Uses content vocabulary with some difficulty
- Can name concrete objects displayed

Grammar skills

- Has command of basic grammatical structures
- Uses some grammar structures, but has problems with verb tenses and number categories

Usage

- Participates in classroom discussions
- Communicates well in social contexts
- Repeats words and phrases

Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

How can these recommendations be accomplished?

Other:

www.ColorinColorado.org
Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

Use this form to document the reading skills of an English language learner. Put a checkmark next to the skill level that best describes the student’s abilities. Complete a new form each month to learn about the student’s gains in reading. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

Student’s name

Grade

Date

Class

Teacher

Use of reading strategies

- Relies more on print than illustrations. Retells beginning, middle, and end of stories.
- Retells main idea of text. Relies on print and illustrations.
- Pretends to read. Uses illustrations to tell story. Memorizes pattern and familiar books.

Word and sentence recognition

- Recognizes range of sight words and names.
- Recognizes basic sight words and names.
- Knows most letter/sound correspondences. Recognizes simple words.
- Recognizes some letters, names, and words in context. Rhymes and plays with words.

Text choices

- Reads a variety of materials, including fiction and non-fiction, fairy tales, poems, directions.
- Reads with little variety in materials.
- Reads books with word patterns.
- Listens to fiction, fairy tales, poems, oral stories.

Level of independence

- Reads silently for short periods of time. Does not need teacher guidance.
- Does not see self as reader. Needs teacher support for many reading tasks.
- Participates in rereading of familiar stories or books. Needs teacher support for most reading tasks.

Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

How can these recommendations be accomplished?

Other:

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Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners


Use this form to document the oral communication skills of an English language learner. Put a checkmark next to the skill level that best describes the student’s abilities. Complete a new form each month to learn about the student’s gains in English proficiency. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>○ Uses content vocabulary</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Can name concrete objects displayed</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammar skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>○ Has command of basic grammatical structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Uses some grammar structures but has problems with verb tenses and number categories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>○ Participates in classroom discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Communicates well in social contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Repeats words and phrases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

How can these recommendations be accomplished?

Other:

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www.ColorinColorado.org
Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

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Use this form to document the reading skills of an English language learner. Put a checkmark next to the skill level that best describes the student’s abilities. Complete a new form each month to learn about the student’s gains in reading. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of reading strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>○ Relies more on print than illustrations. Retells beginning, middle, and end of stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Retells main idea of text. Relies on print and illustrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Pretends to read. Uses illustrations to tell story. Memories pattern and familiar books.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<th>Word and sentence recognition</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>○ Recognizes range of sight words and names.</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Recognizes basic sight words and names.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Knows most letter/sound correspondences. Recognizes simple words.</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Recognizes some letters, names, and words in context. Rhymes and plays with words.</td>
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<th>Text choices</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>○ Reads with little variety in materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Reads books with word patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Listens to fiction, fairy tales, poems, oral stories.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level of independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>○ Reads silently for short periods of time. Does not need teacher guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Does not see self as reader. Needs teacher support for many reading tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Participates in rereading of familiar stories or books. Needs teacher support for most reading tasks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

How can these recommendations be accomplished?

Other:

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Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

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Fluency Skills
Expressive Reading

Use this form to document an English language learner’s ability to read with expression. Complete a new form each month to learn about the student’s proficiency level. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expressive readers read with stress, pitch variations, intonation, phrasing, and pausing in their voices. Use the following rubric to assess expression. Listen to a student read for about sixty seconds and indicate below his or her overall reading proficiency and fluency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reads primarily in large, meaningful phrase groups. Some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from the text. Most of the story is read with expressive interpretation. Reads at an appropriate rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reads primarily in three and four word phrase groups. The majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Little or no expressive interpretation is present. Generally reads at an appropriate rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reads primarily in two-word phrase groups. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to the larger context of the sentence or passage. Reads significant sections of the text excessively slow or fast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reads primarily word-by-word. Lacks expressive interpretation. Reads text excessively slowly or with excessive speed, ignoring punctuation and other phrase boundaries. Reads with little or no expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

How can these recommendations be accomplished?

Other:

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www.ColorinColorado.org
Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

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Use this form to document an English language learner’s use of reading strategies that aid in comprehension. Complete a new form each month to see whether the student is learning and using new reading strategies. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Monitors whether he/she is understanding what has been read
- Asks for help when he/she is confused about what has been read
- Makes predictions about stories and texts
- Completes graphic organizers to enhance his/her understanding of what has been read
- Generates questions about what has been read
- Rereads for answers to questions
- Summarizes stories or content area texts
- Is able to sequence correctly a series of events that occurred in a story or text
- Is able to distinguish between fact and opinion (grade appropriate), fiction and nonfiction
- Is able to find the main idea, important facts, and supporting details from a text that he/she read

Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

How can these recommendations be accomplished?

Other:

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www.ColorinColorado.org
Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

Expressive Reading

Use this form to document an English language learner’s ability to read with expression. Complete a new form each month to learn about the student’s proficiency level. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

Student’s name

Grade

Date

Class

Teacher

Expressive readers read with stress, pitch variations, intonation, phrasing, and pausing in their voices. Use the following rubric to assess expression. Listen to a student read for about sixty seconds and indicate below his or her overall reading proficiency and fluency.

Score Criteria

4 Reads primarily in large, meaningful phrase groups. Some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from the text. Most of the story is read with expressive interpretation. Reads at an appropriate rate.

3 Reads primarily in three and four word phrase groups. The majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Little or no expressive interpretation is present. Generally reads at an appropriate rate.

2 Reads primarily in two-word phrase groups. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to the larger context of the sentence or passage. Reads significant sections of the text excessively slow or fast.

1 Reads primarily word-by-word. Lacks expressive interpretation. Reads text excessively slowly or with excessive speed, ignoring punctuation and other phrase boundaries. Reads with little or no expression.

Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

How can these recommendations be accomplished?

Other:

www.ColorinColorado.org

Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

Use this form to document an English language learner’s use of reading strategies that aid in comprehension. Complete a new form each month to see whether the student is learning and using new reading strategies. Use the form to help you plan next steps, and share this assessment with other educators who are assisting your student.

Student’s name

Grade

Date

Class

Teacher

- Monitors whether he/she is understanding what has been read
- Asks for help when he/she is confused about what has been read
- Makes predictions about stories and texts
- Completes graphic organizers to enhance his/her understanding of what has been read (graphic organizer has been modeled for the student, and guided practice has already been provided)
- Generates questions about what has been read
- Rereads for answers to questions
- Summarizes stories or content area texts
- Is able to sequence correctly a series of events that occurred in a story or text
- Is able to distinguish between fact and opinion (grade appropriate), fiction and nonfiction
- Is able to find the main idea, important facts, and supporting details from a text that he/she read

Recommendations: What kind of help does this student need during the coming weeks or months?

How can these recommendations be accomplished?

Other:

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Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

Although it may seem like a small gesture, using Spanish phrases can mean a great deal to your students and their families. Making an effort shows that you respect and value their language. Although it may seem like a small gesture, using Spanish phrases can mean a great deal to your students and their families. Making an effort shows that you respect and value their language.

www.ColorinColorado.org
Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

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Starter Kit for Primary Teachers.

Cognates are words in two languages that share a similar meaning, spelling, and pronunciation. Almost 40 percent of all words in English have a related word in Spanish. For Spanish-speaking English language learners, cognates are an obvious bridge to the English language. The following is an alphabetical list of English and Spanish cognates. Please see http://www.colorincolorado.org/introduction/cognates.php for suggestions on how to use cognates to help students learn English.

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Enthusiastic

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Comet (to) cometer

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Contest

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Contribute

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Continue (to) continuar

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Contract

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Coast

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Capitalize

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Capture (to) capturar

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Cause

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Causation

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Carcass

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Corn

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Circle

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Classroom Expressions

Common Classroom Phrases

Spanish

Cognates

Classroom

Common Classroom Phrases

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Cognates

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Common Classroom Phrases

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Cognates

Candidate

Common Classroom Phrases

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Spanish

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Common Expressions | Expresiones Comunes

Hello | Hola
Good morning | Buenos días
What's your name? | ¿Cómo te llamas?
My name is | Mi nombre es...
Where is...? | ¿Dónde está...?
Many thanks | Muchas gracias
Common Expressions | Expresiones Comunes

Where is...? | ¿Dónde está...?
Many thanks | Muchas gracias
Common Expressions | Expresiones Comunes

Baltimore, MD: The Success for All Foundation.

The following is an alphabetical list of English and Spanish cognates. Please see http://wwww.ColorínColorado.org/introduction/cognates.php for suggestions on how to use cognates to help students learn English.

Cognates are words in two languages that share a similar meaning, spelling, and pronunciation. Almost 40 percent of all words in English have a related word in Spanish. For Spanish-speaking English language learners, cognates are obvious bridges to the English language.

Similar Spanish – English Words

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<th>English</th>
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Similar Spanish – English Words

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Adapted from: Eastern Stream Center on Resources and Training (ESCORT). (2003). Help! They Don’t Speak English. Starter Kit for Primary Teachers.

Adapted from: Colorín Colorado ELL Starter Kit for Educators / www.ColorínColorado.org Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners
<table>
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<tr>
<th>English</th>
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www.ColorínColorado.org

Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

The following bilingual books would be great additions to any classroom. Bilingual books, which are often written with Spanish and English appearing side-by-side, can help introduce bilingual skills, increase language and listening abilities, and increase students’ cultural awareness. Reading aloud to bilingual learners can be a particularly powerful instructional tool. Read alouds can help develop students’ vocabularies, introduce new concepts, and reinforce understandings of what students already know. See http://www.colorincolorado.org/inclass/books_month.php for more information about these books plus discussion questions and suggested classroom activities.

Mamá Goose: A Latino Nursery Treasury
By Alma Flor Ada & F. Isabel Campoy
Grade Levels: K–7
This book is a collection of Spanish-language lullabies, finger games, nursery rhymes, jump-rope songs, riddles, birthday songs, and more.

Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States
Edited by Jose Marie Carlson
Grade Level: 8–12
A collection of poems from an array of seasoned poets and young Latino authors describing their experiences in the United States, these poems depict the reality and hardships some young Latinos have experienced, the search for identity, as well as the joy of family gatherings surrounded by food, customs, and culture.

Family Pictures/Cuadros de Familia
By Carmen Lomas Garza
Grade Level: 2–5
Family Pictures is a bilingual book that describes the author’s childhood using her paintings. Carmen has carefully illustrated the story with detailed paintings, presenting specific life experiences that unmistakably show her family’s proud heritage and traditions.

My Diary from Here to There/
Mi diario de aquí hasta allá
By Amada Irma Pérez
Grade Levels: K–5
My Diary from Here to There represents a young girl’s perspective on how her family comes to live in the United States. Throughout the book the main character, Amada, keeps a written journal in which she invites the reader to learn more about her experiences as she describes how her life changes as she moves to the new country.

Iguanas in the Snow and Other Winter Poems/
Iguanas en la nieve y otros poemas de invierno
Written by Francisco X. Alarcón, Illustrated by Maya C. Gonzalez
Grade Level: K–5
Francisco X. Alarcón describes in this book many of his winter experiences growing up in the city of San Francisco, California. He has taken many of his childhood experiences to create fun, creative poems.

www.ColorinColorado.org
Information, activities, and advice for educators of English language learners

Reading, and a love for reading, begins at home. These one-page reading tip sheets offer easy ways for parents to help their children become successful readers—even if parents don’t speak English! It turns out that children who have a solid foundation in their first language have an easier time learning to read in English, so we’ve provided the tip sheets in eleven languages.

Some of the tips include tracing and saying letters out loud, pointing out print, and saying tongue twisters. If parents aren’t strong readers themselves, it is still important for them to know that they can make a positive contribution and help build their children’s literacy skills by encouraging their love for reading and by telling them how important it is to read.

The tip sheets are categorized by grade level, but feel free to use them with children at various ages and stages. And we encourage you to use and distribute these as part of larger parent outreach efforts at your school.

You can download the tip sheets at:
http://www.colorincolorado.org/guides/readingtips

Reading tip sheets are available in the following languages:
- English
- Arabic
- Navajo
- Spanish
- Haitian Creole
- Russian
- Chinese
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Vietnamese

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**My Diary from Here to There/ Mi diario de aquí hasta allá**
By Amada Irma Pérez
Grade Level: 3–6
This book represents a young girl’s perspective on how her family comes to live in the United States. Throughout the book the main character, Amada, keeps a written journal in which she invites the reader to learn more about her experiences as she describes how her life changes as she moves to the new country.

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