The Bell Foundation



EAL Assessment Framework for Schools

SECONDARY

August 2023

About this Framework

The Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework supports primary and secondary schools in assessing progression in EAL learners over time in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Viewing, and Writing.

This framework will be updated from time to time.

Please check that you have the latest version at www.bell-foundation.org.uk.

Acknowledgements

The Bell Foundation was established in 2012 and is working to overcome exclusion through language education in the UK. The Bell Foundation is a charity and focuses on two thematic areas: children with English as an Additional Language and individuals in contact with the criminal justice system whose first language is not English.

The Bell Foundation would like to thank Dr Michael Evans, Dr Neil Jones, Professor Constant Leung and Dr Yongcan Liu for their thorough and robust work, which has culminated in the EAL Assessment Framework for Schools. We would like to give a special thank you to Professor Constant Leung, the Project Coordinator, for steering the project.

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Foreword

Dear Colleagues

As teachers and educators we are rightly proud of the ethnic and linguistic diversity in our schools. At the same time we acknowledge that we have to continually renew our efforts to meet the needs of all pupils. Many of our bilingual or multilingual pupils are in the process of learning English as an Additional Language (EAL). As the language of schooling is English, the vast majority of these pupils experience the curriculum content through, in effect, EAL.

We all know that the process of learning an additional language in school is not the same as early-years first language development. It is therefore very important that teachers are provided with EAL-sensitive assessment tools that can help them recognise pupil language achievements and needs.

I am very pleased to introduce the EAL Assessment Framework for Schools. In the research and development of this assessment framework we consciously adopted a classroom-friendly, curriculum-language integrated approach so that teachers can use the rating scales and the complementary materials for day-to-day informal assessment as well as more formal summative assessment. Many of the assessment descriptors have been formulated in such a way that they can be used by teachers from different curriculum and subject areas.

On behalf of the Research and Development Team, I would like to thank The Bell Foundation for its generous financial support, and The Bell Foundation Associates for their critical comments and insightful advice.

Yours



Professor Constant Leung FAcSS
King's College London



The EAL Assessment Framework won the prestigious British Council's ELTons Awards 2018 in the Local Innovation category.

Secondary **LISTENING**

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

NOT EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN ORDER

GETTING CLOSER TO THE NEXT BAND

CODE	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E
	Engaging in highly-scaffolded listening activities, learning basic classroom language and linking sounds to actions and meanings	Demonstrating an emerging ability to understand and respond verbally in interactions with others based on their understanding of the context	Developing more independence in the use of basic listening skills needed to engage with learning	Applying listening skills over an increasing range of contexts and functions	Showing an ability to understand and respond to spoken communication in classroom and school contexts with little or no hindrance
1	Can understand everyday expressions aimed at meeting simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to them in clear, slow and repeated speech by a sympathetic speaker	Can understand and respond to long(er) questions and instructions (e.g. *'Tell me why you chose this answer, and not any of the others'*)	Can understand the main points of video and other social media material about familiar subjects delivered clearly	Can begin to follow some culturally-specific practices when listening to English (e.g. eye contact, distance, gesture)	Can define the nature and purpose of information being sought before listening or viewing
2	Can follow classroom instructions when the context and actions of teachers and peers are supportive	Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narratives and stories	Can follow and negotiate with other pupils during group work	Can comprehend the different meanings of a range of vocabulary across different curriculum areas (e.g. *'table'* in science and *'table'* in a description of a room)	Can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly
3	Can understand a small range of words, and, with help, everyday vocabulary (e.g. colours, shapes, preferences)	Is becoming aware of levels of difficulty of the content in the lesson beyond the most concrete or simple topics	Can understand some idiomatic or figurative expressions, but may require explanation (e.g. *'Jaswinder can run like the wind'*)	Is beginning to correctly interpret intonation, stress and other culturally-specific non-verbal communication	Can demonstrate understanding of well-known idioms in context (e.g. *'to kill two birds with one stone'; 'to cut corners'*)
4	Can understand what people say about everyday things if they speak slowly and clearly with a supportive manner	Is beginning to engage with abstract or complex content, including concepts that cannot be explained and illustrated easily (e.g. pressure, pollution)	Can generally follow group discussion and ask for help and repetition where necessary	Can follow and participate in group conversations, especially on familiar topics in informal English	Can select key information for a purpose, rejecting irrelevant and unimportant information
5	Can understand and follow directions (e.g. how to get somewhere)	May ask for clarification and extra time when participating in complex listening tasks, group performances or class discussions	Can follow directions in classroom tasks, paying attention to details	Can follow reasoning and argument in the same way as most peers	Can follow the gist and some detail of a spoken text on a new topic at normal speed (e.g. in the media, visiting speakers)
6	Can understand a limited amount of frequently used vocabulary and language expressions across different subject areas (particularly the academic register, e.g. *'concept'*, *'topic'*)	Is beginning to comprehend a range of topic-related vocabulary across **different subjects**	Can follow and understand specialised or subject-specific terminology if it has previously been introduced	Can understand audio-visual recordings in standard dialect likely to be encountered in social and learning contexts and can identify the content of information, speaker viewpoints and attitudes	Can order information gained from spoken language, choosing a suitable organising format
7	Can ask a speaker to repeat or explain words in order to understand more of the message (particularly when in supportive situations)	Is beginning to correctly interpret intonation, stress and other culturally-specific non-verbal communication	Can respond appropriately in most unplanned classroom exchanges	Can communicate in familiar formal and informal registers, interpreting spoken English mainly at a literal level and organising language and ideas drawn from different sources	Can evaluate the quality and validity of information gained from spoken communication
8	Can listen for longer, and understand new words and phrases when content is delivered with enough contextual support (e.g. visual/video images)	Can follow reasoning, discussion or argument in English, providing speakers are clear and unambiguous	Can understand the gist of most spoken and audio-visual texts, and can identify specific information if questions are given beforehand	Can understand an unfamiliar speaker on a familiar topic	Can follow a complex argument on familiar topics or themes and ask appropriate and relevant questions
9	Can understand questions about topics learned in class	Can understand and use, independently, many of the support systems and scaffolds that operate within lessons (e.g. a note-taking framework to jot down facts or ideas while listening)	Can engage in sustained listening to a level approaching that of most peers	Can record and organise spoken information to set guidelines (e.g. use diagrams, graphs, tables)	Can identify the effects of devices such as rhythm, metaphor and repetition
10	Appears to be increasingly confident, engaged and independent in tasks requiring listening and speaking	Can understand the information content of the majority of recorded or broadcast audio material on topics of personal interest delivered in clear standard speech	Can begin to interpret meaning and feelings from intonation, volume, stress, repetition and pacing, particularly when working with familiar topics	Can follow and communicate in a variety of social and learning contexts, understanding ideas and information on a range of familiar topics and issues	Can identify implied meanings from spoken language (e.g. racist attitudes)

Secondary **SPEAKING**

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

NOT EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN ORDER

GETTING CLOSER TO THE NEXT BAND

CODE	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E
	Emerging competence in basic oral expression	Oral competence includes emerging ability to respond verbally in interactions with others	Emerging competence in spontaneous expression and communication	Competence in producing more varied and complex speech in a wider range of contexts	Developing competence in fluent, creative use of English
1	Can establish social contact, (e.g. greetings and farewells, introductions, giving thanks)	Can describe people, places and possessions in simple terms (e.g. *'She is very tall lady with black glasses'*, *'My phone case it is blue and has picture of birds in trees'*)	Can communicate simply in routine tasks to ask for and provide things, get simple information and discuss what to do next	Can summarise in longer utterances, with some cohesion, about subject content (e.g. *'When vaccination began number of deaths got lower'*)	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech with an effective logical structure that helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points
2	Can produce simple, mainly isolated phrases about people and places, although often with errors such as omission of preposition (e.g. *'He explain me'*)	Can express own feelings and wishes more independently	Can express and respond to feelings such as surprise, happiness, sadness, interest and indifference	Can express opinions and reactions regarding possible solutions or what to do next, giving brief reasons and explanation	Can give a clear, prepared presentation, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view, and giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options
3	Can express basic needs or feelings in simple terms, with limited range of adjectives and inaccurate use of verbs (e.g. *'I not have ruler'*, *'I am feel happy'*)	Can use some frequently heard adjectives independently (e.g. *'big'*, *'fast'*, *'good'*)	Can contribute to informal discussion with friends, provided their speech is clear and/or in locally practised school English	Can use a growing range of subject-specific technical vocabulary and begin to use some imagery (e.g. metaphors and similes)	Shows an understanding of pause, stress, rhythm and intonation and how these can convey values, perspectives and feelings
4	Can use common verbs like go, do and make but with frequent omission of inflection (e.g. *'Teacher say'*) or problems with negative forms (e.g. *'I not do it'*)	Can communicate some content about concrete matters during simple, familiar tasks (e.g. *'This animal cell, it has 3 parts'*)	Can comment briefly on the views of others (e.g. in history lessons or in literature lessons)	Can use both formal and informal English in appropriate contexts	Can synthesise and report information and arguments from a number of sources
5	Can make simple statements, usually single words or short phrases, relating to lesson content, usually with scaffolding from the teacher (e.g. *'Curley try to say who is boss in the ranch'*)	Can sometimes participate effectively in discussion with English speakers who modify their language to make it easier for them	Can self-correct some slips of the tongue or word/pronunciation errors	Can express their thoughts about abstract or cultural topics such as music or films	Can easily follow and contribute to complex interactions between third parties in group discussion even on abstract, unfamiliar topics
6	Pronounces comprehensibly and attempts to approximate English stress and intonation (e.g. when asking a question, using the negative, emphasising a word)	Can give simple directions and instructions (e.g. explain how to get somewhere or do something)	Can express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement politely (e.g. by making comparisons and contrasts)	Can explain why something is a problem (e.g. by presenting facts, examples or arguments)	Can defend opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments
7	Can handle short social exchanges but may not understand enough to keep a conversation going of their own accord	Can participate in short conversations in routine contexts on topics of interest	Can explain own point of view and defend it (e.g. in a class discussion in an RE lesson)	Can give a clear, systematically developed presentation, with highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail	Can relate the plot of a book or film and describe their reactions
8	Can interact in a simple way but communication is dependent on repetition at a slower rate of speech and rephrasing	Can discuss what to do next and make and respond to suggestions, but still likely to struggle with complex utterances such as 'If' clauses for conditionals and conjecture (e.g. *'If you leave it in water, it might expand'*) Can indicate time by phrases such	Can discuss familiar subject content across different curriculum areas	Can explain in reasonable detail the results of an enquiry (e.g. science experiment)	Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously, controlling a range of registers
9	Can ask and answer simple questions and initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics studied in class	as *'next week'*, *'last Friday'*, *'in November'*, *'at three o'clock'*	Can use paraphrase to cover gaps in vocabulary or structural knowledge	Can express thoughts and feelings by using allusions, making jokes and using some idiomatic expressions	Has good command of a broad vocabulary with little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies
10	Can say what they like and dislike (e.g. school subjects, lesson activities, sport, leisure activities)	Is beginning to successfully take part in group work with peers in lessons and in whole-class interaction with the teacher	Can use English effectively in problem-solving tasks (e.g. in a group task on health and food)	Can use a growing range of everyday and specialist vocabulary in all learning areas (e.g. *'subtract'*, *'calculate'*) and can identify multiple meanings of many familiar words (e.g. *'angle'* in English and *'angle'* in mathematics)	Can argue a formal position convincingly, responding to questions and comments and answering complex lines of counterargument fluently, spontaneously and appropriately

Secondary **READING & VIEWING**

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

NOT EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN ORDER

GETTING CLOSER TO THE NEXT BAND

CODE	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E
	Little or no knowledge of written English; taking first steps to engage with written and digital texts in English	Making sense of written text at word and phrase/ sentence level, using visual information to help decipher meaning	Drawing on growing knowledge of vocabulary and grammar to engage with curriculum-related texts and tasks	Working with written language and accompanying visual and aural material productively, using different strategies in response to curriculum tasks	Engaging with curriculum-related reading activities independently and productively in different subject areas
1	Engages with reading activities in English, continues to use first language, culture and experiences when given the opportunity (e.g. recognising vocabulary cognates such as *'volcano'-'vulcan'* in Romanian and using factual knowledge acquired via first language), and can recognise and use pictures and other visuals as a source of meaning	Can recognise many frequently occurring words by sight or initial letter, and is beginning to use awareness of grapheme-phoneme correspondence to decode unfamiliar words	Can understand and locate relevant information in online and printed curriculum material, and in everyday written items such as emails, school letters/notices and text messages	Can tackle most curriculum-related reading tasks, adjusting focus and speed of reading for different purposes, but may need support to deal with unfamiliar idioms and abstracted meaning	Can read all forms of the written language in print or online with ease, including abstract, linguistically complex curriculum-related texts and some specialist articles (e.g. sports reports)
2	Can recognise and understand familiar words (including own name if new to reading or to Roman script) on displays and notices in the classroom and school	Can classify and sort visual images using word labels or icons (e.g. minerals versus metals)	Can decipher the meaning of unfamiliar words by using context, subject content knowledge and inferencing	Can use spelling patterns, syntactic and semantic cues, to work out the meanings of unfamiliar words (e.g. *'brotherly', 'shellfish'* or using knowledge of *'taken/took'* to work out what *'shaken'* or *'shook'* means) Can make predictions about	Can independently choose strategies to achieve understanding (e.g. varying the pace of reading for selective attention and text difficulty)
3	Can begin to identify grapheme-phoneme correspondence with familiar words when reading out loud (e.g. the /s/ sound in words such as *'sit', 'sweet'*)	Can recognise and understand some words, phrases and simple sentences (with visuals) that have already been taught/rehearsed in class	Can recognise meaning relationships, such as cause/ effect and time sequences within and across sentences signalled by signpost words, such as *'because', 'different from'*	the likely content meaning of curriculum, subject and literary texts based on knowledge of the different classroom activities and text types	Can distinguish between factual statements and a writer's point of view (e.g. an account of the historical events leading to the First World War versus an appreciation of a poem)
4	Can begin to make sense of the use of commas, full stops and other frequently used punctuation marks when reading both quietly to oneself and to others	Can find and extract information in a short text that has been taught/rehearsed (including visual images and graphics) to answer *'what'* and *'who'* questions	Can understand and track meaning across sentences and passages, paying attention to topic-related language (e.g. *'forest', 'trees'*) and cohesive markers (e.g. *'firstly', 'secondly'*) to express cohesion in meaning	Can read aloud a curriculum-related text without rehearsal, signalling meaning through volume and patterns of stress and intonation	Can follow contemporary fiction independently and can discern the literary techniques involved (e.g. alliteration)
5	Can follow a short written text with aural and visual support (e.g. listening to it being read aloud, someone using the illustrations to clarify meaning by pointing, annotating)	Can understand and use diagrams, charts and other displays showing announcements and notices around the school	Can read short texts aloud, showing awareness of word inflections (e.g. *'-ed'* in *'walked'*) and using punctuation to guide intonation (e.g. commas for brief pauses)	Can search for and locate information from a range of sources, including the internet and social media	Can handle book-length factual and biographic texts, appreciating different styles; can understand some subject specialist jargon in own field(s) of interest
6	Can use print and digital material in first language as a support for joining in curriculum activities in English	Can recognise and understand subject-specific vocabulary and associated expressions with support (e.g. *'equals'* in mathematics)	Can understand fictional texts written in contemporary prose, but may still need help to distinguish literal meaning from implied meaning, oblique cultural references, sarcasm and humour Can understand curriculum-	Can use a range of reading and viewing strategies, such as adjusting reading rate, selective rereading, scanning and reading on, as appropriate for the task at hand Can select, transfer and transform	Can comprehend printed and online articles and blogs concerned with news/current affairs, with an understanding of the author's stances or viewpoints
7	Can recognise and re-use new English vocabulary in the context of classroom activities, and understand words looked up in bilingual online/print resources	Can begin to combine developing learning strategies such as using word recognition, context, own experience and repeated reading to decipher meaning (e.g. in activities involving the use of a map of the world)	related texts beyond the literal level, with teacher and peer support, using context and visual clues to deduce meaning	information from a text, selecting relevant details for the purpose at hand (e.g. from a novel for a book review)	Can identify meaning, relationships and structures of information in curriculum texts (e.g. causal/effect, problem/ solution, evaluation/choice)
8	Can recognise and understand words and short texts that have been taught/rehearsed in class	Can attempt to navigate curriculum material, using headings, contents lists, page numbers, visuals and graphics (particularly if online)	Can extract key information and messages from curriculum subject texts and re-present the information in a different form (e.g. a mind map)	Can search and locate information from a variety of sources, including the internet, and can track key information across passages (e.g. chapters in books)	Can analyse a range of texts and reflect on the purposes of different types of texts, including fictional and informative texts (e.g. space exploration), to support an opinion or recommendation
9	Can recognise common spelling patterns, prefixes (e.g. 're-' in 'replace') and suffixes (e.g. *'-cycle'* in *'bicycle'*), and is beginning to use this awareness to assist comprehension	Can begin to make use of visual cues and graphic information when reading without prompting	Can begin to identify the author's perspective in curriculum content and literary texts	Can read a wide range of curriculum-related material suggested by teachers and/or peers to enrich knowledge and understanding	Can identify and interpret specific ideas and narrative developments in curriculum-related tasks (e.g. justifying an opinion or response)
10	Can recognise and read common words out loud, with approximate pronunciation	Can read and understand most of the words/sentences/short passages in the texts that have been taught/rehearsed	Can follow and make use of most curriculum-related and contemporary literary texts in school work, but may need help with unfamiliar idiomatic, figurative, metaphoric expressions and personification (e.g. *'Opportunity knocked at her door'*)	Can read a wide range of curriculum-related texts with understanding (including literature), and interpret content meaning beyond the literal where appropriate	Can search and collect information from different sources, including the internet, and can identify relevant information across complex passages and in lengthy in print or digital/online texts

Secondary **WRITING**

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

NOT EXPECTED TO BE ACHIEVED IN ORDER

GETTING CLOSER TO THE NEXT BAND

CODE	BAND **A**	BAND **B**	BAND **C**	BAND **D**	BAND **E**
	Demonstrating competence in managing basic, simple and isolated phrases	Demonstrating competence in producing simple sentences and paragraphs on familiar topics conforming to taught content and expectations	Demonstrating competence in describing and narrating personal experiences with greater accuracy and beginning to experiment with more sophisticated writing in a variety of genres in different curriculum contexts	Demonstrating competence in controlling the content and structure of writing with greater accuracy and using a fuller range of vocabulary and grammar	Demonstrating competence in writing accurately and independently in a variety of genres and in critically evaluating various resources to support their writing
1	Can label pictures with simple words learnt in lessons (e.g. labelling a map)	Can form and reproduce most English letters and familiar clusters of letters in frequently encountered words without support	Can use cohesive devices to link within and between paragraphs (e.g. *'but', 'however'*), but may need teacher and/or peer support	Is showing greater awareness of the differences between formal and informal language (e.g. written operating instructions, the script of an everyday conversation in a play)	Can produce clear and detailed text on a variety of topics in relation to curriculum subjects (e.g. a report on an experiment, a critique of current affairs)
2	Can form and reproduce some English letters as part of a curriculum task	Can use basic punctuation accurately for various purposes (e.g. commas to separate ideas, capitals to start a sentence, full stops to conclude sentences)	Can use a variety of tenses (e.g. simple past tense, present perfect tense) based on taught examples to represent meaning	Can use a wide range of grammatical features consistently, including use of passive voice, choice of modal verbs (e.g. *'would', 'could'*), connectives (e.g. *'then', 'later'*) and conjunctions (e.g. *'although', 'however'*)	Can present well-structured texts on complex subjects with clear points and justifications
3	Can show awareness of common and simple spelling patterns (e.g. words formed by letters, letters connected to certain sounds such as /s/ in *'sit'* and *'site'*)	Can use everyday vocabulary and phrases (e.g. 'scrap paper', 'washing-up liquid') and start to experiment with common classroom expressions and terms (e.g. *'I set up the experiment', 'we found out the answer'*)	Can connect simple sentences into an on-task passage and incorporate information from different sources to form an extended text	Can write coherent stories and descriptions of experiences with clear supporting details in relation to lesson content	Can summarise and synthesise information from a number of resources and formulate own opinions to develop convincing arguments
4	Can copy and write own name	Can follow and reproduce examples of text format and layout for subjects across the curriculum (e.g. title, subheadings, new page)	Can present abstract and concrete information in relation to curriculum subject content with reasonable precision and can articulate solutions to solve problems based on information	Can produce detailed and clearly structured texts across a range of genres at an age-appropriate level (e.g. narrative, exposition, argumentation)	Can write clear, well-structured texts in English across the curriculum with an appropriate style and register
5	Can use first language to scaffold their effort to form English words (e.g. use a dictionary to find English equivalents, ask for English translation of words in first language)	Can show some awareness of the differences between formal and informal language, but writing still has features of everyday spoken language (e.g. *'I mean', 'come on', 'you know', 'gonna'*)	Can write effectively with increasing independence in familiar curriculum tasks (e.g. answering subject content-based questions), although support for grammar and vocabulary is still needed	Can produce extended texts with an attempt to develop coherent arguments based on logical reasoning (e.g. a supporting statement for clean air measures)	Can express critical appreciation and appraisal of literary and creative texts
6	Can complete sentence starters if examples are provided (e.g. *'I like', 'I am', 'I come from'*)	Can show awareness of the range of meanings of tenses, but may tend to use the same tense for different situations (e.g. simple present tense for both present and past events)	Can write personal messages in the form of blogs, emails, etc. sharing news and thoughts about issues of personal interest (e.g. sport, education, friendship)	Can respond to controversial issues in writing by presenting different perspectives including their own and those of others	Can show subtlety in use of English expressions (e.g. metaphor, humour, irony) and use them with confidence appropriately in context
7	Can give personal information in written form (e.g. name, address, age, date of birth when filling in forms)	Can construct sentences independently, but might seek help or require modelling	Can write short, basic descriptions of past and present events drawing on personal experiences, feelings and emotions (e.g. writing about one's first school)	Can use some collocation (e.g. 'heavy rain') and colloquialisms, but writing still has features of non-idiomatic use of language in relation to context and audience (e.g. *'I got familiar with ...'* instead of *'I became ...'*)	Can express own views effectively and relate to others with reference to personal values and beliefs
8	Can copy known letters and words related to curriculum subjects and attempt to communicate their meaning to teachers and peers (e.g. colours, school subjects)	Is starting to combine sentences to produce paragraphs in relation to their past experience or immediate environment (e.g. people, places, schools)	Can write brief reports on curriculum activities (e.g. visits to a museum) based on taught formats (e.g. presenting factual information, justifying reasons for actions, stating causes of problems)	Can show some subtlety in expressions involving feelings and emotions (e.g. writing in the role of a story-based character expressing emotions)	Can plan writing with a particular audience in mind and, when needed, can redraft text to suit different audiences
9	Can write simple, isolated words on familiar topics in relation to the curriculum (e.g. *'water'* and *'river'* related to the topic of the water cycle)	Can write simple on-task and cohesive paragraphs on familiar topics after some rehearsal in class and/or with peers	Can write short, simple essays on topics of personal interest or on a rehearsed curriculum topic (e.g. holiday, sports)	Can demonstrate awareness of cultural conventions of writing in English and in their first language (e.g. use of an opening sentence(s) in a passage to indicate key ideas that are to follow)	Can vary style and format to adapt to different requirements and contexts of writing
10	Can write simple phrases about themselves (e.g. likes and dislikes, their daily life)	Can begin to write meaningful sentences and paragraphs, which reflect taught content in subjects across the curriculum	Can begin to edit their writing with the support of teachers and peers	Can edit own work, and as a result, writing shows greater fluency, accuracy and appropriateness after proofreading	Can review, evaluate and edit their work independently

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