

### Characteristics of ELL Students with and without a Disability

Characteristics	ELL Student WITHOUT a Disability	ELL Student WITH a Disability
<b>CAUSE OF PERCEIVED PROBLEM</b>	Extrinsic. Adaptation process to environment.	Intrinsic. Physiological in nature.
<b>SOCIAL ABILITIES/AFFECTIVE FACTORS</b>	Demonstrates appropriate social skills for home country. May have some social problems due to lack of familiarity with American customs, language, and expected behaviors. May experience social isolation. Student may tend to interact more with pupils from own cultural group. May exhibit behavioral problems associated with experiences of failure in the regular or special education program.	May exhibit behavioral problems not attributable to adjustment and acculturation; may have difficulty forming appropriate social relationships; may have frequent fights or arguments. May experience cultural identity problems and have poor self-esteem.
<b>COMMUNICATION SKILLS</b>	Normal language learning potential. Demonstrates ability to achieve communicative competence in first language. Errors are attributed to second language acquisition rather than speech/language disability. Eventually, the student communicates proficiently in the second language.	May not achieve communicative competence in either first or second language. Speech language disorders exhibited in the areas of articulation, voice, fluency, or receptive and expressive language. Student does not express basic needs adequately. Peers indicate that they have difficulty understanding the student.
<b>LANGUAGE SKILLS</b>	First language is age appropriate. Nonverbal communications skills (such as eye contact, response to speaker, clarification or response, turn taking, etc.) are appropriate for age and culture. English language acquisition corresponds to that expected based on the student’s length of time in English speaking schools. Student may demonstrate a loss of receptive and expressive language skills in first language when exposed to second language.	First language is not appropriate for age level. Student does not learn English at the same rate as student without disability. Nonverbal communication skills are not appropriate for age level. Sentence structure is shorter or disordered, and grammar is incorrect for age. Student may replace speech with gestures and communicate nonverbally when talking would be appropriate and expected. Student perseverates on a topic even after a topic has changed. May need to hear things repeated, even when they are stated simply and comprehensibly. Student may echo what she or he hears. English language acquisition does not correspond to that expected based on the student’s length of time in English speaking schools.

Characteristics	ELL Student WITHOUT a Disability	ELL Student WITH a Disability
<b>ACADEMIC FUNCTIONS</b>	Normal potential. Apparent problems are related to lack of or inadequate schooling in home country.	Significantly below grade level performance may be due to inability to make progress in second language acquisition or difficulty retaining academic information despite a variety of interventions; history of academic difficulties in home country or first language.
<b>COGNITIVE ABILITIES</b>	Cognitive abilities are average. Students usually score better on nonverbal sections of cognitive tests and their scores on the verbal portion of the tests increase over the years.	Verbal and nonverbal abilities are inconsistent or significantly low. Students score better on nonverbal sections of cognitive tests and their scores on the verbal sections of the tests do not increase steadily over the years.
<b>PROGRESS</b>	Shows expected progress in English acquisition and development of academic skills. No marked discrepancy between different areas (such as oral and writing skills). English progress should continue steadily even if slowly.	May show less than expected progress in English acquisition and development of academic skills. May show a marked discrepancy between different areas (such as oral and writing skills) which cannot be attributed to lack of sufficient time or appropriate interventions.
<b>HEALTH</b>	No significant health characteristics.	History of ear infections, hearing problems, sleep or eating disturbances, incontinence, and family incidence of learning disability may have influence on learning.
<b>SENSORY FUNCTIONING</b>	May exhibit periodic “overload” response such as gazing off and blanking out what is heard for short periods of time during an initial adjustment to new setting.	Auditory or visual processing difficulties exhibited over period of time without signs of improvement.
<b>MOTOR SKILLS</b>	Normal	Exhibits fine and/or gross motor impairments.
<b>PRODUCTIVITY</b>	May have difficulty with verbal and written directions or beginning/switching tasks due to insufficient English development but often finds strategies or techniques for coping.	May have difficulty with verbal and written directions or beginning/switching tasks for a variety of reasons and may not acquire strategies for coping; has difficulty completing tasks following explicit instructions.