

Student _____	Grade _____	Age _____
School _____	Teacher _____	
Observer (print name) _____	Signature _____	

**MASSACHUSETTS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT – ORAL (MELA-O)<sup>1</sup>**

**Final Version September 1994**

The MELA-O is an observation scale which facilitates the assessment of English language proficiency of English Language Learners in grades K-12. The MELA-O is a 6 point scale to be used as part of a comprehensive English Language assessment system. Placement and programming decisions should be based on results of both the MELA-O and assessment in other language modalities (i.e., reading and writing).

**Directions:** For each of the domains and sub-domains below, mark an "X" across the box that best describes a student's abilities. Use black ink for the fall observation of MELA-O and red ink for the spring observation. Use the Student Information Summary form on the reverse side to report the results of each observation.

		LEVEL 0	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
PRODUCTION	COMPREHENSION	No demonstrated proficiency	Recognizes simple questions and commands; responds to more complex utterances with inappropriate or inaudible responses	Understands interpersonal conversation when spoken to slowly and with frequent repetitions; acknowledgement may be non-verbal, in the native or in the target language	Understands/is capable of responding to most interpersonal and classroom discussions and interaction when frequent clarifications are given	Understands nearly all interpersonal and classroom discussions, although occasional repetitions may be necessary	Understands interpersonal conversation and classroom discussions
	FLUENCY	No demonstrated proficiency	Speech is limited to an exchange of fixed verbal formulae (e.g. commonly used sentences and phrases) or single word utterances	Uses familiar sentences with reasonable ease; long pauses or silence are common and gestures are often used to illustrate meaning	Begins to create more novel sentences; speech in interpersonal and classroom discussions is frequently interrupted by a search for the correct manner or expression	Speech is interpersonal and classroom discussion is generally fluent, with occasional lapses while the student searches for the correct manner of expression	Speech in interpersonal conversation and in classroom discussions is approximately that of a native speaker of the same age
	VOCABULARY	No demonstrated proficiency	Has limited command of isolated vocabulary for common objects and activities but comprehensibility is often difficult	Has command of words for common objectives/activities but choice of words is often inappropriate for the situation/context; comprehensibility remains difficult	Has adequate vocabulary to permit somewhat limited discussion of interpersonal and classroom topics; usually comprehensible.	Flow of speech is rarely interrupted by inadequate vocabulary; is capable of rephrasing ideas and thoughts to express meaning	Use of vocabulary and idioms approximates that of a native speaker of the same age
	PRONUNCIATION	No demonstrated proficiency	Seldom intelligible and is strongly influenced by the primary language, including intonation and word stress; must repeat to be understood	Sometimes intelligible and is frequently influenced by the primary language and must repeat utterances to be understood.	Usually speaks intelligibly though with some sounds still influenced by the primary language; frequently uses non-native intonation patterns	Always intelligible with occasional inappropriate intonations patterns; slight influence of the primary language may still be observed	Pronunciation and intonation approximates that of a native speaker of the same age
	GRAMMAR	No demonstrated proficiency	Can produce only memorized grammar and word order forms	Often uses basic grammar patterns correctly for simple, familiar phrases and sentences	Uses basic grammar correctly; uses complex language structures that are often incorrect	May make grammatical errors; however, they do not obscure meaning	Grammatical usage approximates that of a native speaker of the same age

<sup>1</sup> The MELA-O is the result of a collaborative effort between the Evaluation Assistance Center (EAC) East at the George Washington University and the Massachusetts Assessment Advisory Group (MAAG). The instrument is based on the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Guidelines and modeled on the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM) developed by the San Jose (CA) Unified School District (1985) and the Student Oral Proficiency Rating (SOPR) designed by Development Associates (1987).