



NATIONAL  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
RESOURCE CENTER

# English Learners in Charter Schools

*A Learning Experience Focused on English Learner Instruction*

2020

[charterschoolcenter.ed.gov](http://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov)

# About the NCSRC

The National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC) provides technical assistance to federal grantees and resources supporting charter sector stakeholders. NCSRC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and managed by Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG) in partnership with WestEd.



# Tips for Formative Assessment and Supporting Students Following COVID-19

## *Learning Module #4*



# Overview of Your Learning Experience



**EL Instruction in Practice:**



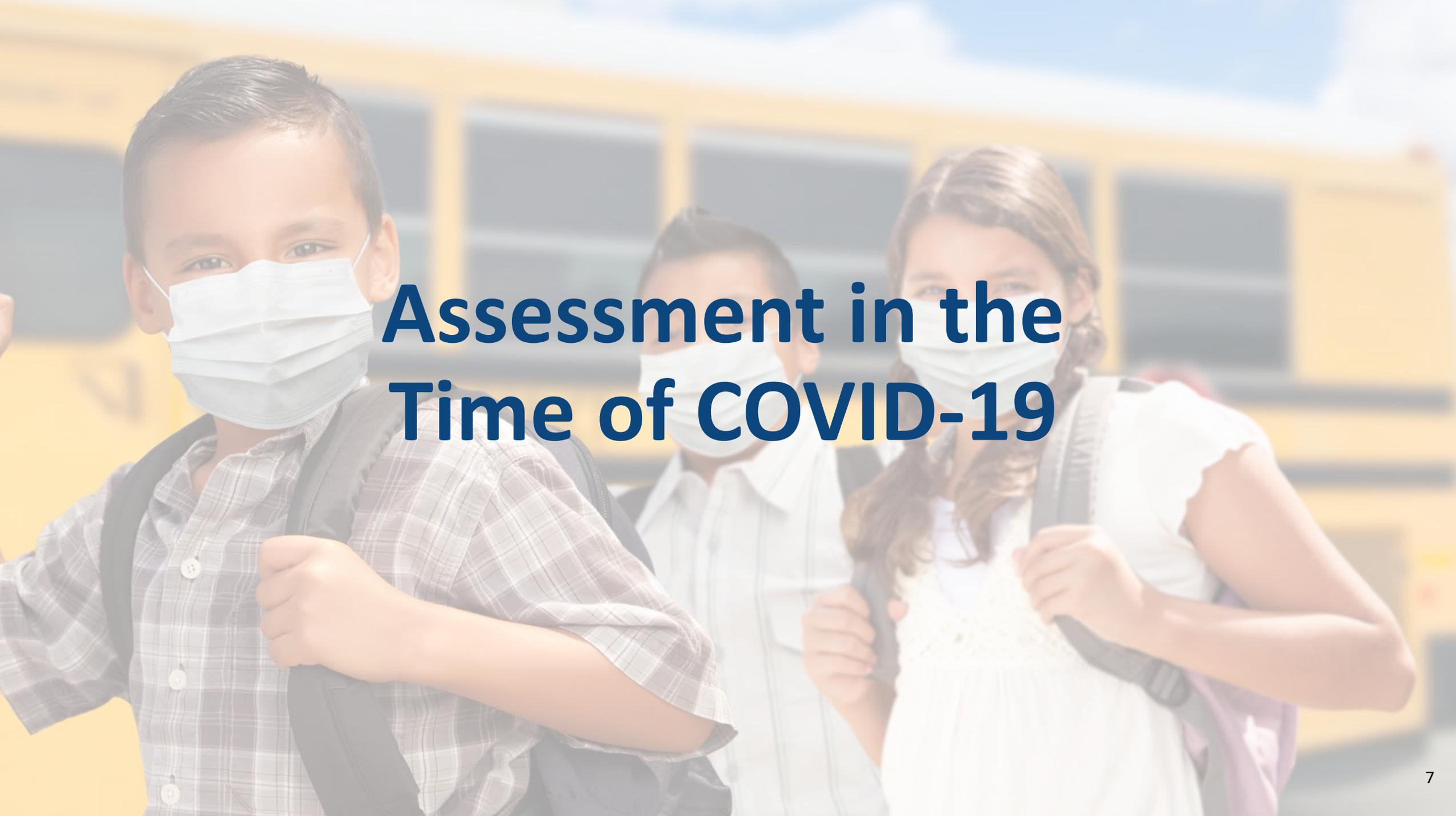
# Learning Objective:

*Provide an overview of how schools may conduct formative assessment of English learner (EL) students when school returns for the 2020-2021 school year*



At the end of this learning module, you should understand:

- The implications of formative assessment during the pandemic
- Ways to approach formative assessment when schools return in Fall 2020

A photograph of three children, two boys and one girl, standing in front of a yellow school bus. They are all wearing white face masks and carrying backpacks. The child on the left is a boy in a plaid shirt, the middle child is a boy in a light blue shirt, and the child on the right is a girl in a white dress. The background is slightly blurred, showing the side of the school bus and a blue sky with light clouds.

# Assessment in the Time of COVID-19

## Assessment in COVID

On March 20, 2020, the Secretary invited requests for waivers of assessment, accountability, and related reporting requirements in the ESEA for the 2019-2020 school year.

If annual English language proficiency (ELP) assessments did not take place in 2019-2020, they can be scheduled early in the 2020-2021 school year. The results can be used for instruction and placement decisions, as well as exit determinations.

If annual ELP assessments in early 2020-2021 school year are not possible, schools could use other resources, such as formative assessments and EL specialist/teacher input to help inform decisions.

Source: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/20-0113-COVID-19-EL-Factsheet.pdf>

# Decisions Educators and Systems Must Make for English Learners

## Identification of Learning Targets

What are this student's strengths, weaknesses, and unknowns with respect to content learning (ELA, math, science) and English language development?

## Instructional Planning

What kinds of supports and opportunities does this student need to be able to participate fully in academic content learning?

## Instructional Placement

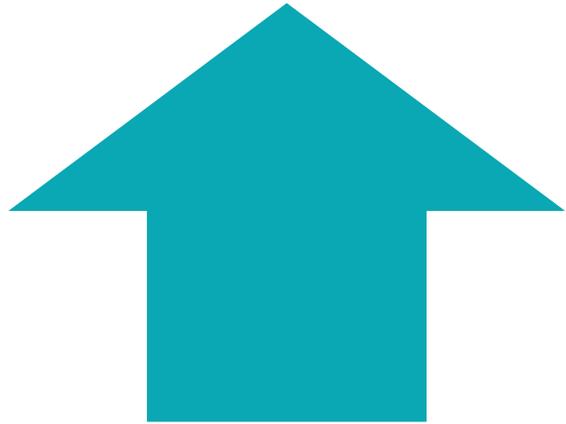
In light of the above, what is the best kind of learning environment for this student among our various offerings?

## Reclassification

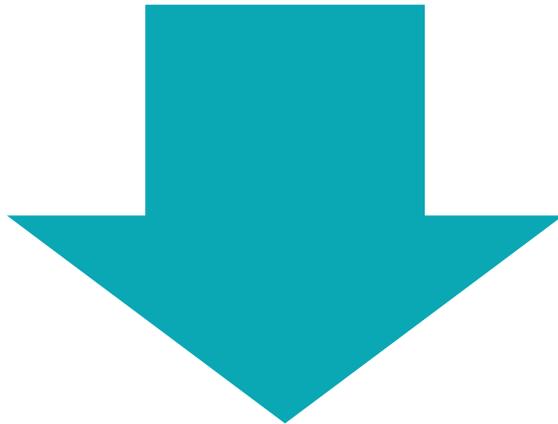
Would this student benefit from remaining an EL for another school year?

# High and Low Stakes Decision Making

Major implications for accountability, funding, and access/service that are not easily reversed (though they can be)



**High Stakes - Reclassification**



**Low Stakes - Identification of learning targets, instructional planning, and instructional placement**

# Decision Making Tools

**Summative  
Assessments  
(High Stakes)**



**Annual Content and  
English Language  
Proficiency  
assessment**

 **Formative  
Assessment  
(Low Stakes)**



**Collected on  
ongoing basis as  
part of regular  
instruction**

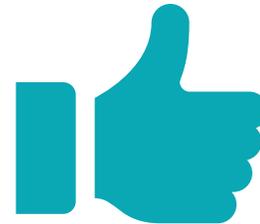
# What is Formative Assessment?

***“The process of monitoring student knowledge and understanding during instruction in order to give useful feedback and make timely changes in instruction to ensure maximal student growth.”***

Noyce & Hickey (2011); Alvarez et al. (2014)

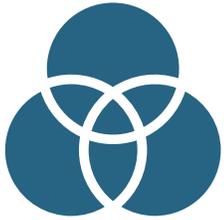


- Test Forms
- One-Off



- Frequent
- Low-Stakes
- Embedded in instruction/curriculum

# Low Stakes Decision Making



Beliefs about strengths, weaknesses, and other factors should be constantly updated and revised based on new information

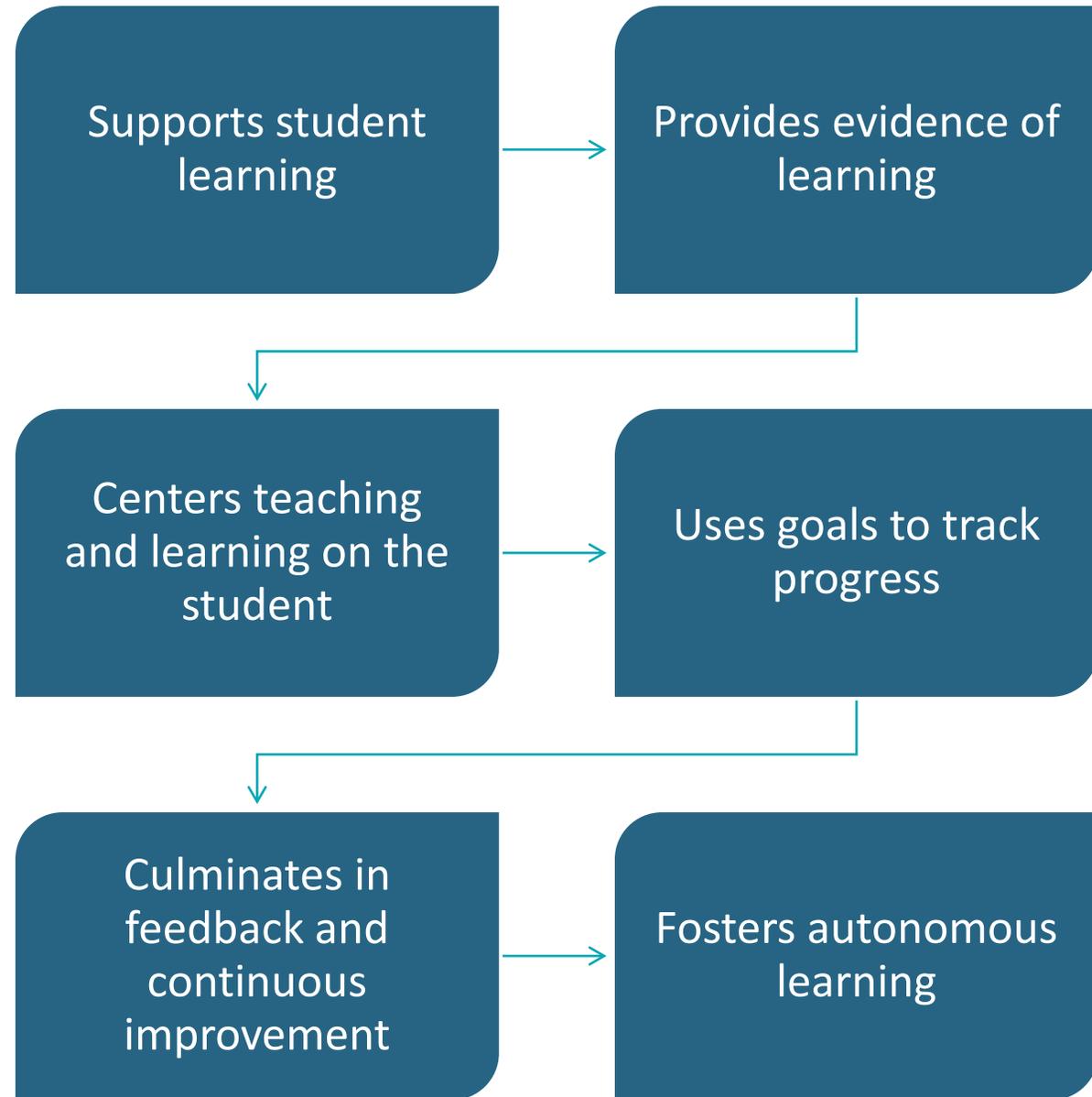


Planning should occur in real time and adapted based on new evidence of student learning and needs



Placement should be flexible in the sense that students who demonstrate a need or readiness for a different environment should be able to move into it

# Six Guiding Principles of Effective Formative Assessment



Source: [https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/1391626953FormativeAssessment\\_report5-3.pdf](https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/1391626953FormativeAssessment_report5-3.pdf)

# Conducting Formative Assessment Post-COVID

Articulate learning goals and target milestones; define success criteria for each EL student

Explore and interpret existing evidence of EL student learning

Collaborate with teachers in integrating EL instruction and assessment in teaching practices

Track progress towards milestones and adjust instruction methods as needed

Derived from: [https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/1391626953FormativeAssessment\\_report5-3.pdf](https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/1391626953FormativeAssessment_report5-3.pdf)

# Tips for Conducting Formative Assessment in Fall 2020



Use low tech, free options to collect information (e.g., written work; oral recordings) about student learning



Provide timely, comprehensible feedback to learners

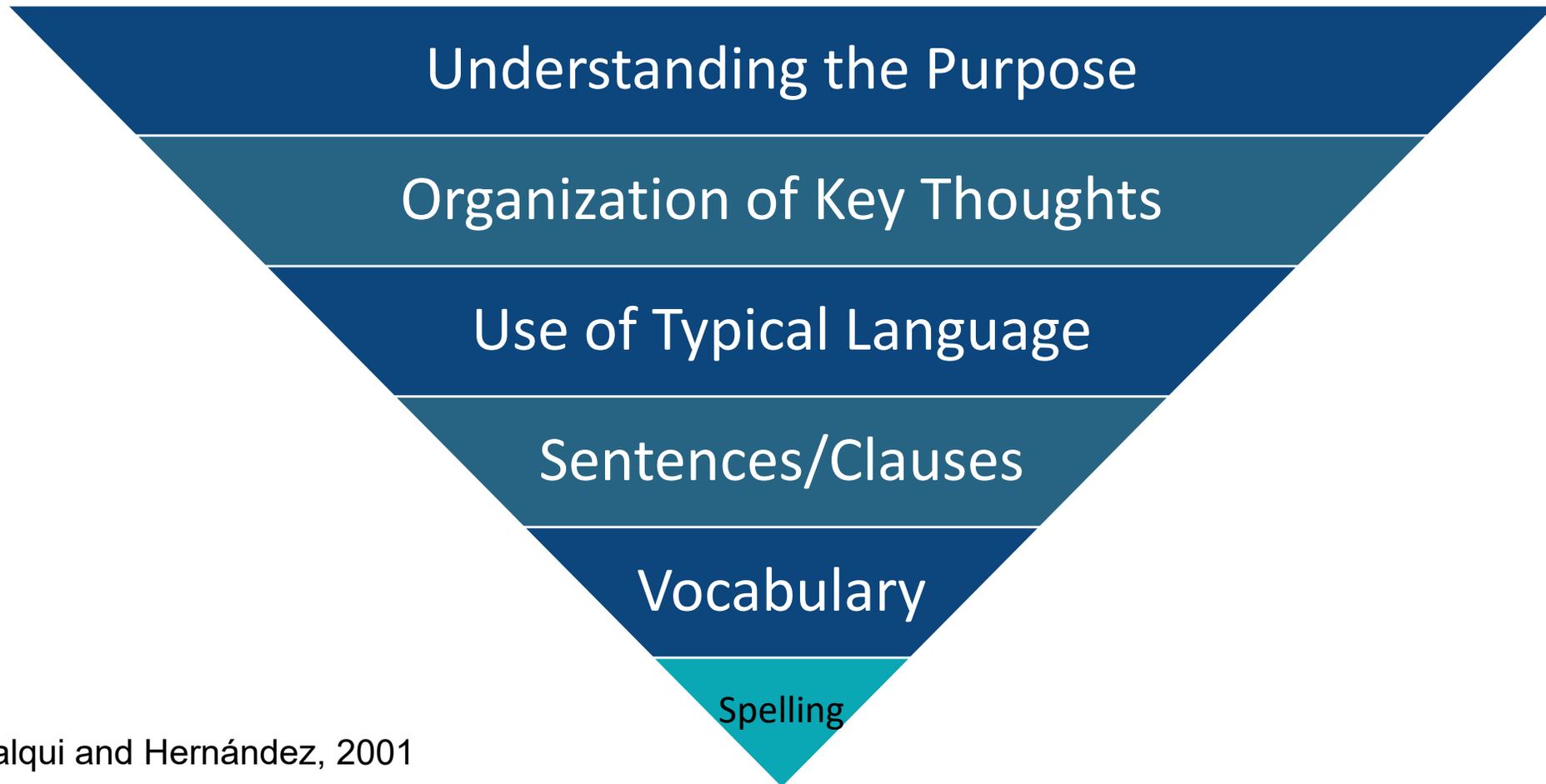


Leverage platforms that provide instant feedback in their home language



Ensure students can complete homework on their own

# What's Important To Focus on in Student Work? In What Order?



Adapted from Walqui and Hernández, 2001



## Additional Reading from The Answer Lab at USC Rossier:

*How can school systems use the results of state English Language Proficiency assessments along with progress monitoring tools in the classroom to determine instructional implications to supporting language development for English Learners?*

[https://theanswerlab.rossier.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/AnswerLab\\_Issue4\\_main-121819-FINAL.pdf](https://theanswerlab.rossier.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/AnswerLab_Issue4_main-121819-FINAL.pdf)

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## Additional Reflection Questions



To what extent are educators in your school system prepared and supported to engage in formative assessment practices generally, and for ELs in particular?



What steps can you take to support educators to implement more, better formative assessment practices with ELs in their classrooms?

# Next Learning Module...

Tips for educating EL students in online learning environments

