


# Informal Language Needs Assessment

<p>Interacting informally with students when you first meet them will give you an idea of their English Language skill level in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Use the following ideas to give you more information about where your student may need most assistance.</p>	
<p><b>Student's identified needs and motivation</b></p> <p>Ask your student about their perceived strengths and areas for development in English, and with their school work including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» where and when they use English, inside and outside school</li><li>» which areas of school work they enjoy / find challenging</li><li>» what they would like help with during homework club hours</li></ul>	
<p><b>Listening skills</b></p> <p>When talking with your student check their understanding by exploring if they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» respond to specific questions</li><li>» identify the main idea and specific details of the conversation</li><li>» follow instructions</li></ul>	
<p><b>Speaking skills</b></p> <p>When listening to your student, note their capacity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» express themselves clearly</li><li>» use grammatical forms correctly (e.g. past tense, adjectives, prepositions)</li><li>» pronounce sounds and words clearly</li><li>» use English rhythm and intonation</li><li>» use English for a variety of purposes (e.g. to describe something or someone, to explain, to express an opinion)</li></ul>	
<p><b>Reading skills</b></p> <p>Ask your student to choose a book they are interested in and read to you. Check their understanding by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» asking them to retell what happened in the story</li><li>» asking them who the main characters were</li><li>» asking them about the setting of the book</li><li>» Also talk to them about what they enjoy reading and why</li></ul>	

## Writing skills

Ask to see an example of your student's written work, or ask them to write a short text about themselves.

Do they:

- » use appropriate sentence structure
- » use appropriate vocabulary
- » use structure appropriate to the text type
- » link ideas
- » use appropriate punctuation
- » identify spelling errors
- » use longer / more formal text types and explore the writing process from drafts to editing
- » enjoy writing and what do they write about

## Student's homework

Explore what homework your student needs support with. Do they:

- » understand the task
- » approach the task confidently
- » need support to get started
- » need support to complete the task

For further assistance with approaches to the areas discussed, see [The Tips for Tutors Videos and Resource Guide](#).