

# Plagiarism Through the Eyes of ESL students and Those Who Teach/Tutor Them

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# Overview

1. English Learner (EL) population
2. English Proficiency policy at OU
3. Understanding of English proficiency levels
4. Reasons ELs plagiarize
5. Helpful activities and resources



# Picker Questions

# EL Population

## *Heterogeneous group*

- Educational needs
- Backgrounds
- Languages
- Goals
- Culture



# English Proficiency Policy at OU

# Understanding English Proficiency Levels

Activity -

Read the three essay responses. Each response was written by an EL. Answer the following questions:

*Would the writer of this essay earn a score allowing for full admission to the university?*



# Picker Questions

## Possible Scenarios - *Must get to a 79 on TOEFL*

Reading	20
Writing	19
Speaking	20
Listening	20
Total	79

Reading	18
Writing	16
Speaking	24
Listening	21
Total	79

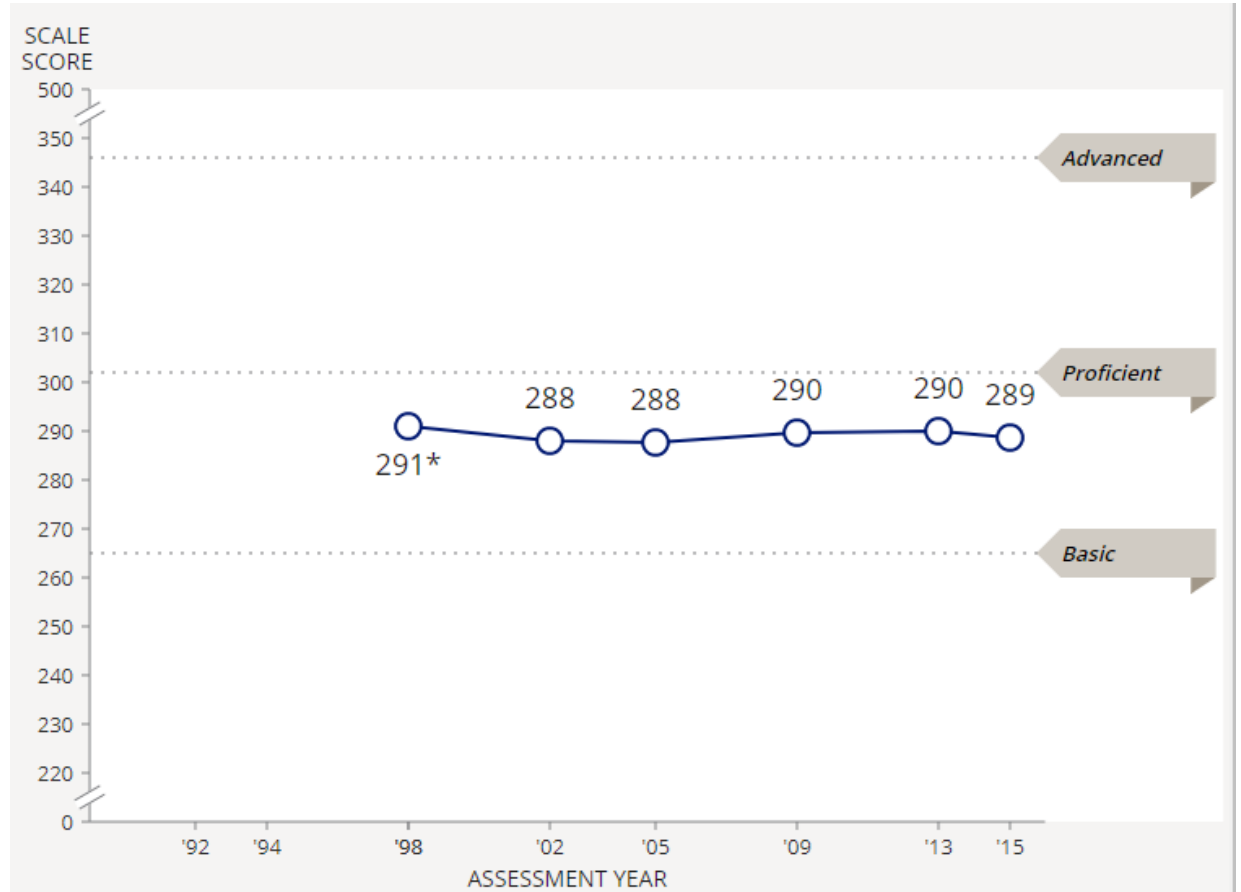
Reading	19
Writing	14
Speaking	25
Listening	21
Total	79



# When writing for an academic class...

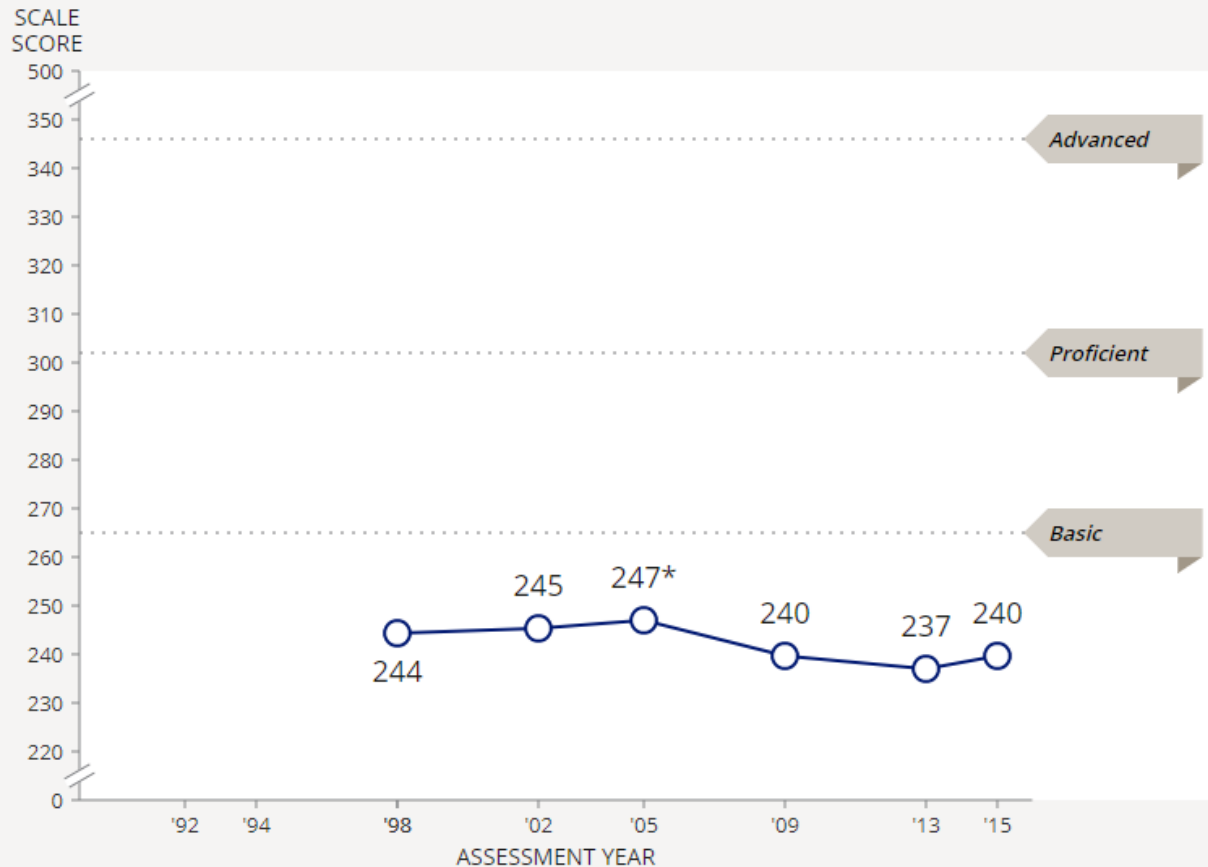
- Lack of practice
- Planning
- Organizing
- Formal versus informal writing/speech
- Common knowledge
- Grammar
- Vocabulary

# NAEP Reading Scores of Non-ESL Students



# NAEP Reading Scores of ESL Students

Trend in twelfth-grade NAEP reading average scores for students who are identified as English language learners



Which of the following texts would be easier for an EL to comprehend?



# Picker Questions

### Passage 1

We're going through!" The Commander's voice was like thin ice breaking. He wore his full-dress uniform, with the heavily braided white cap pulled down rakishly over one cold gray eye. "We can't make it, sir. It's spoiling for a hurricane, if you ask me." "I'm not asking you, Lieutenant Berg," said the Commander. "Throw on the power lights! Rev her up to 8,500! We're going through!" The pounding of the cylinders increased: ta-pocketa-pocketa-pocketa-*pocketa-pocketa*. The Commander stared at the ice forming on the pilot window. He walked over and twisted a row of complicated dials. "Switch on No. 8 auxiliary!" he shouted. "Switch on No. 8 auxiliary!" repeated Lieutenant Berg. "Full strength in No. 3 turret!" shouted the Commander. "Full strength in No. 3 turret!" The crew, bending to their various tasks in the huge, hurtling eight-engined Navy hydroplane, looked at each other and grinned. "The Old Man'll get us through," they said to one another. "The Old Man ain't afraid of Hell!" . . . "Not so fast! You're driving too fast!" said Mrs. Mitty. "What are you driving so fast for?"

### Passage 2

The culture of Byzantium was rich and affluent, while science and technology also flourished. Very important for us, nowadays, was the Byzantine tradition of and public debate. Philosophical and theological discourses were important in public life, with even emperors taking part in them. The debates kept knowledge and admiration for Greek philosophical and scientific heritage alive. Byzantine intellectuals quoted their classical predecessors with great respect, even though they had not been Christians. And although it was the Byzantine emperor Justinian who closed Plato's famous Academy of Athens in 529, the Byzantines are also responsible for passing on much of the Greek legacy to Muslims, who later helped Europe explore this knowledge again and transition from the Middle Ages into the European Renaissance.

## Passage 1

300-400L

The crew, bending to their various tasks in the huge, hurtling eight-engined Navy hydroplane, looked at each other and grinned. “The Old Man’ll get us through,” they said to one another. “The Old Man ain’t afraid of Hell!” . . .

**“Not so fast! You’re driving too fast!” said Mrs. Mitty. “What are you driving so fast for?”**

Thurber, J. (1998). *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*. *James Thurber: 92 Stories*.

## Passage 2

1200-1300L

And although it was the Byzantine emperor Justinian who closed Plato’s famous Academy of Athens in 529, the Byzantines are also responsible for passing on much of the Greek legacy to Muslims, who later helped Europe explore this knowledge again and transition from the Middles Ages into the European Renaissance.

Byzantine Empire. (n.d.). Retrieved February 02, 2018, from <http://www.livius.org/articles/misc/byzantine-empire/>

“Put it into your own words?”

What does this really mean?



- Plagiarism not well defined nor understood
- Western concept
- Part of the learning process
  - Low proficiency level - not possible to provide documentation for all sources
  - Patchwriting - process of learning to paraphrase and summarize
- Intention
- Common knowledge
- Cultural views concerning errors and making mistakes
- Outside factors
- “We don’t know what we don’t know.”

# Reasons ELs May Plagiarize

# Helpful Activities and Resources

- Teach summarizing and paraphrasing techniques
- Content versus grammar - what is important?
- Build confidence in writing skills
  - What is acceptable?
  - What is not acceptable?
  - Who can EL ask for help?
- Help students brainstorm ideas for topics (in-class or during office hours)

# Helpful Activities and Resources

- Require students to turn in work in stages for long term projects and give credit for specific sections
- Talk to students - ask questions and check on progress
- Peer review - share during process and proofread
- Refer to Writing Center or department graduate assistant
- Rewordify - <https://rewordify.com/>

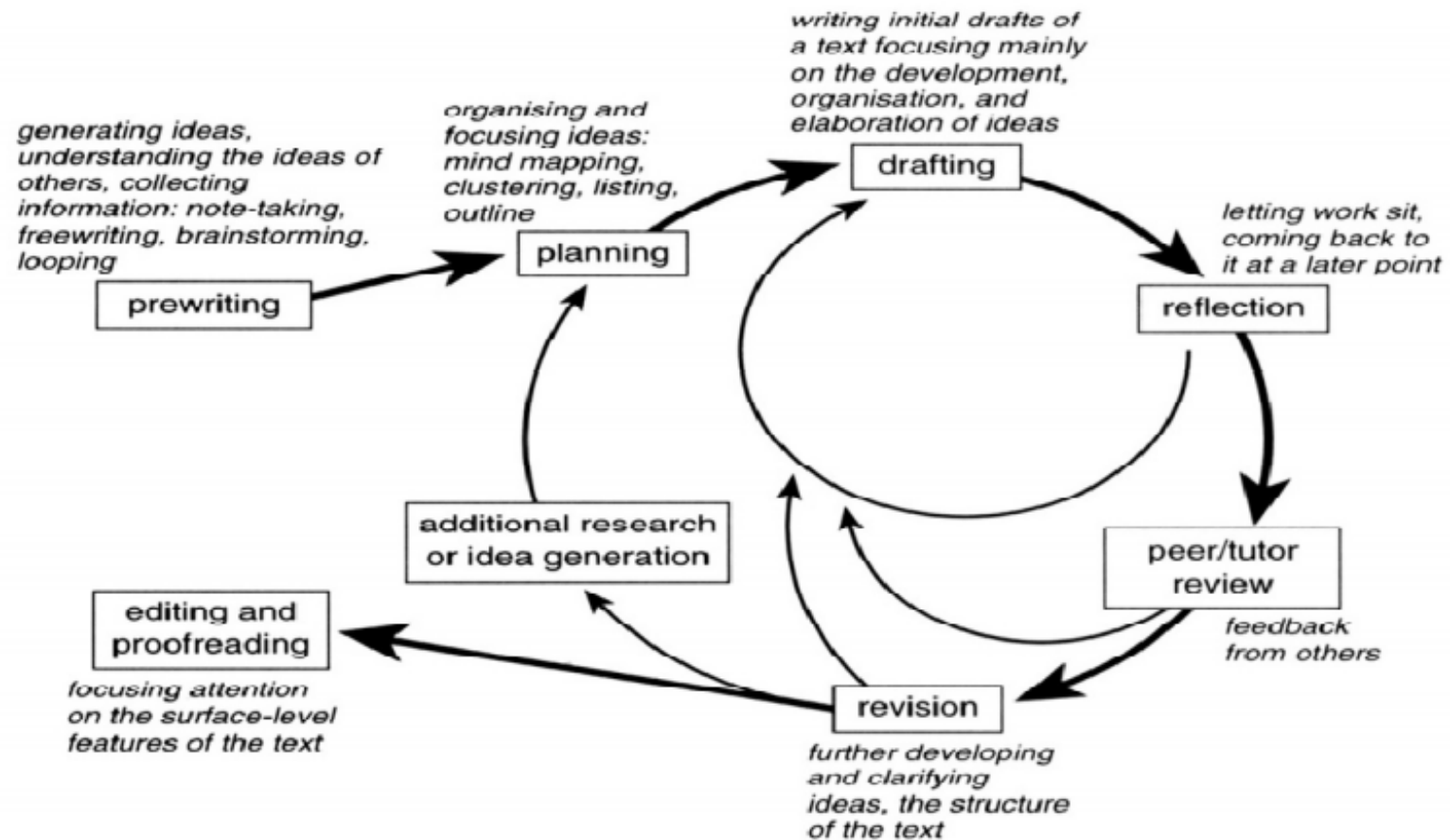


Figure 1. Feedback in process. Source: Coffin et al. (2003, p. 34).

# Plagiarism

Plagiarizing the work of others. Plagiarism is using someone else's work or ideas without giving that person credit. By doing this, a student is, in effect, claiming credit for someone else's thinking. This can occur in drafts, papers and oral presentations. Whether the student has read or heard the information used, the student must document the source of information. When dealing with written sources, a clear distinction should be made between quotations, which reproduce information from the source word-for-word within quotation marks, and paraphrases, which digest the source of information and produce it in the student's own words. Both direct quotations and paraphrases must be documented. Even if a student rephrases, condenses or selects from another person's work, the ideas are still the other person's and failure to give credit constitutes misrepresentation of the student's actual work and plagiarism of another's ideas. Buying a paper or using information from the Internet without attribution and handing it in as one's own work is [plagiarism](#).



Questions?

# Resources

Coffin, C., Curry, M. J., Goodman, S., Hewings, A., Lillis, T., & Swann, J. (2003). Teaching academic writing: A toolkit for higher education. London: Routledge.

Collier, V. P. (1987). Age and rate of acquisition of second language for academic purposes. *TESOL quarterly*, 21(4), 617-641.

Ehrenreich, B. (2010). *Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in America*. Metropolitan Books.

Laufer, B., & Ravenhorst-Kalovski, G. C. (2010). Lexical threshold revisited: Lexical text coverage, learners' vocabulary size and reading comprehension. *Reading in a foreign language*, 22(1), 15.

Short, D., & Fitzsimmons, S. (2007). *Double the work: Challenges and solutions to acquiring language and academic literacy for adolescent English language learners: A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Alliance for Excellent Education.

Test Magic. Retrieved from [http://www.testmagic.com/Knowledge\\_Base/TOEFL/Writing/samples/index.htm](http://www.testmagic.com/Knowledge_Base/TOEFL/Writing/samples/index.htm)