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Who are Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education?

According to New York State, SIFE Learners (Students with Inconsistent/Interrupted Formal Education) are English Language Learners (ELLs) who may have attended school in the U.S. for less than 12 months and who, upon initial enrollment, are two or more years below grade level in literacy in their home language and/or two or more years below grade level in math, due to inconsistent or interrupted schooling prior to arrival in the U.S. *(CR Part 154 definition of SIFE)*

For some students, education in their home country may not have been interrupted but rather inconsistent and/or limited due to situations such as shorter school days, work commitments, or difficulty in traveling to school.

Example

When students enter 9th grade, they are reading at grade level if they have an 8th grade reading comprehension level.

If Mariama, for example, were a SIFE learner entering 9th grade, her reading comprehension level in her home language would be at grade 6 or below.
What is the process for SIFE identification in New York State?

Please see the [NYSED flowchart](#) for the SIFE identification process. For more information, consult the [SIFE manual](#) on our website or browse the NYSED website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>SCREENING - HOME LANGUAGE QUESTIONNAIRE (HLQ):</strong> Administer the HLQ to all new students, which is to be maintained in each student's cumulative record. Students must be enrolled in school upon registration. HLQ indicates student's home or primary language is other than English. <strong>CONTINUE TO STEP 2: SCREENING - INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>SCREENING - INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW:</strong> An individual interview is conducted with the student in English and in the student's home or primary language by qualified personnel. This includes reviewing documents, prior assessments, and academic experience. An assessment of abilities and work samples determines the literacy and math level in the home or primary language. The interview and all future oral and written communications must be conducted with a qualified translator/interpreter provided by a schooldistrict. Results of the individual interview conform that the student speaks and/or understands a language other than English. Review of student's stability and work in English and in the home language obtained during the individual interview may assist in SIFE determination. If the student does not have an ID, proceed to Step 3. If the student has an ID, follow steps for students with an ID before proceeding to Step 3 (see ELL ID Process chart).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>INITIAL ELL IDENTIFICATION ASSESSMENT:</strong> Qualified personnel administer the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSTELL). For students with disabilities, provide appropriate testing accommodations per the student's IEP, as indicated in CR section 245.5. Results or copies of NYSTELL score sheets and results must be maintained in each student's cumulative record. If student scores below the COMPARING level on the NYSTELL, student is an ELL. Follow procedures for parent notification of ELL Identification and proceed with parent orientation and program placement. Use ELL ID Process chart. If a student was identified as a potential SIFE during Step 2, continue to Step 4: DETERMINATION OF ELL STUDENT WITH SIFE STATUS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>DETERMINATION OF POTENTIAL SIFE STATUS:</strong> Qualified Personnel Administer SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire. This interview must be conducted in English and in the student's home language by qualified personnel. The interview and all future oral and written communications must be conducted with a qualified translator/interpreter provided by a schooldistrict. Results of the SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire indicate student is a potential SIFE. <strong>PROCEED TO STEP 5: ADMINISTER MULTILINGUAL LITERACY SIFE SCREENER (MLS) IN THE HOME LANGUAGE.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>ADMINISTER MLS:</strong> Qualified personnel administer the MLS. Interview notes, academic and assessment history, and work samples are to be collected and maintained in the student’s cumulative record. Results of the MLS indicate student is a SIFE. <strong>PROCEED TO STEP 6: ADMINISTER THE WRITING SCREENER.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>ADMINISTER WRITING SCREENER:</strong> to determine the student’s basic writing skills in his or her home or primary language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For which subset of SIFE learners is the Bridges sheltered program designed?

Bridges students in the sheltered program have home language literacy at third grade or below and are categorized as **SIFE with Developing Literacy (SDL)**.

In the rest of this guide, we refer to this group as **SDL Learners**.

**Targeted Population**
Why not include students with higher levels of home language literacy?

The texts and tasks in the sheltered curriculum are targeted to students with developing literacy in home language who need additional supports and scaffolds to participate meaningfully in secondary classrooms.

Students with higher levels of literacy will be able to access higher level texts with support and participate in mainstream classes provided they have additional interventions to guide their content and language learning.

We also offer materials and guidance on how to support SIFE Learners with varied levels of home language literacy through training and our SIFE manual.
Which grade levels do you serve?

We serve middle and high school students, grades 6-12. We targeted this group of learners since they have a high potential for dropout.* Our curriculum for Sheltered ENL/ELA is developmentally appropriate for a range of adolescent SDL but is not necessarily appropriate for elementary school, particularly in themes and texts selected. For instance, the curriculum’s community building strategies are designed to resonate with secondary age students.

Programming & Curriculum
How much does the curriculum cost and who can use it?

The project is funded by the New York State Department of Education (NYSED) and is available to schools in New York State only at this time. There is no cost for the curriculum or professional development, however, schools are required to purchase reading libraries for their students. See this handout for more information on required texts.
How do I access the curriculum?

All of the Bridges curriculum is available on our site to members of the cohort who have participated in the orientation. Once a teacher and administrator participate in the orientation and confirm they will use the curriculum, we share the password.
How are the courses designed? Can one be implemented without the other?

Attendance at Bridges Professional Development trainings is prioritized for those implementing both courses. Taught concurrently, both courses support all aspects of language and literacy development for learners in our sheltered classrooms. We recommend using both courses since students with lower literacy levels in home language can benefit from both the thematic questions and stretch texts of the Integrated ELA classroom as well as the individualized leveled instruction in the Stand-alone ENL classroom. Stand-alone ENL helps students develop foundational literacy, increase their reading comprehension and build confidence at their reading level.

See the 2-course design handout for more information.
What are the thematic units for the Integrated ELA course?

Identity is the main theme for Unit 1; Power and Resources are the main themes for Unit 2; Water and impact are the themes for Unit 3. Each unit builds on the academic thinking and language developed in earlier units.

All units are designed around Essential Questions that build upon background knowledge to create new content knowledge. For example, Unit 1 begins with the students’ backgrounds and then the lens of identity becomes a way to analyze characters in Unit 2. All of the units create opportunities for critical thinking and community building.
How can I see the curriculum implemented in the classroom?

Check out Bridges videos:

1) The **Stand-alone ENL** and **Integrated ELA** classes in action, including how to conference with a student in the Stand-alone class;

2) **Teaching English syntax in the Bridges ELA classroom.**

For our full video list please visit: [bridges-sifeproject.com/bridges-videos/](http://bridges-sifeproject.com/bridges-videos/)
How precise should a teacher be about following the lesson plans?

The lesson plans have been piloted and revised to support strong implementation, but all curriculum is meant to be adapted to meet the needs of students.

There are specific instances where the teacher should be mindful of following the design features of the lessons and units. For example, the gradual release template ensures that the learners are able to work in collaboration with others and also progress to independent production so they can develop skills in both areas. Further, the daily questions guide and scaffold the learning and building of ideas. Remember this rule of thumb: the structure and design of the curriculum are the most important to follow rather than following every task or detail in a given lesson.
I’m planning my curriculum pacing calendar for the year. What materials will I need?

Cohort members can visit the Bridges website and review the Integrated ENL/ELA curriculum, which is comprised of 3 units for the school year.

Each unit includes a pacing calendar. Additionally, the instructional protocol guide describes how to use the protocols embedded in lessons.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- Protocols
  - Instructional Protocols
- Unit 1
  - Unit 1 Instructional Guide - Full.pdf
  - Unit 1 Additional Resources
  - Multilingual Glossaries
- Unit 2
  - Unit 2 Instructional Guide - Full.pdf
  - Unit 2 Additional Resources
  - Multilingual Glossaries
- Unit 3
  - Unit 3 Instructional Guide - Full.pdf
  - Unit 3 Additional Resources
  - Multilingual Glossaries
The Stand-alone ENL portion of the site requires some navigation because it is a centers-based class with students at different English literacy levels across 4 different centers. One is a targeted instruction center led by the teacher and the other 3 are independent practice centers:

1) Teacher-led group reading and writing
2) Independent reading;
3) Independent writing;
4) Foundational literacy skills

We have posted a video resource to support you to find the resources you need: the "Stand-alone Welcome Video." You will find the resources referred to in the video posted below the video according to the phase of implementation.
Visit the Bridges ordering page on the ARC website: [americanreading.com/bridges/](http://americanreading.com/bridges/). A full set of books for Stand alone and Integrated costs about $5,000, the bulk of which is for Stand-alone centers. We also have a list of alternative book companies which provide resources. Please email [admin@bridges-sifeproject.com](mailto:admin@bridges-sifeproject.com) with any questions about the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 2: Challenge &amp; Risk</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Qty.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>$13.49</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emmanuel’s Dream (HC)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 3 books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required Core Texts (1 copy per student)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Wise (PB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Core Texts (1 copy per teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our World of Water (HC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrated ENL/ELA Part 1: Optional Additional Resources

### Stand Alone ENL Part 2 Leveled Texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA Part 2: Classroom Libraries</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Qty.</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Group Reading Text Sets (Y-2R)</td>
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<td>$2,500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Reading Text Sets (1G)</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Reading Text Sets (2G)</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Reading Text Sets (1B-2B)</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Reading Text Sets (1R-2R)</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Library (Y)</td>
<td>$1,750.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1,750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Library (1G)</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Library (2G)</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Library (1B)</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Library (2B)</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Library (1R)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Library (2R)</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Stand Alone ENL Part 2: Optional Leveled Texts

Grand Total $4,250.00
How do I assign credit to each Bridges class in the Sheltered ENL/ELA program?

Schools have the discretion to assign elective or ELA credit to the Bridges classes based on district requirements. For more information, please contact us.

For ELA credit in the Integrated ELA class, teachers must be ELA certified. For more information and advisement, please contact admin@bridges-sifeproject.com.
How can we organize our 3 periods of Integrated ELA and Stand-alone ENL to align to the curriculum?

Please use the guidelines outlined for Entering students in CR Part 154 (see chart below). For high schools, in the beginning of the school year you may want to start with 1 period of Stand-alone ENL instead of 2 as students familiarize themselves with the centers and build stamina. This suggestion is based on teacher feedback from the classroom.

As you become familiar with the needs of your students, we can offer guidance around programming on a case by case basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bridges Courses Entering Students</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Programming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>• 1 unit of study INT ENL-ELA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 unit of study STA ENL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 flexible unit in either course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>• 1 unit of study INT ENL-ELA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 unit of study STA ENL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What materials are available for other content areas in the sheltered classroom? Is training available?

Select units are available online for Science, Math, and Social Studies as additional options for the sheltered classroom.

Currently, we only provide training and professional development for the ENL/ELA units. The orientation is still a prerequisite to receive access to all content area modules.
What if our school doesn’t have enough students for a sheltered program? Can a class be too small?

We recommend 4-16 students as the ideal number of students to build the classroom community and target the skills required. Under 4 students is usually considered better suited to a “pull out” class intervention. We recommend you talk with your district representative and principal to decide on how to manage programming.

If a sheltered environment is not possible with the staffing available, we suggest providing either 1) intervention classes that can support language and literacy during the school day; or 2) adjusting, adapting and differentiating texts in the content area classroom whenever possible with another adult such as co-teacher, teaching assistant or paraprofessional. We are rolling out a professional development to support ENL teachers and their content-area teacher partners in this kind of work. Consult the Bridges website for upcoming training dates.
Is Bridges considered to be a bilingual program?

While Bridges is not designed as a bilingual program, it can be incorporated into an existing bilingual program structure. The ELA/ENL curricula respect and honor home language through strategies such as home language partners in a multilingual program or use of Spanish language supports to build meaning in texts. We also offer an HLA Spanish curriculum which aligns Bridges with a Spanish bilingual school context more readily. Please let us know if you would like to connect with any of the teachers who are piloting the HLA Spanish unit.
Has this program proven successful in schools?

We published a cross-case study of four schools showing successful implementation with growth in reading and non-cognitive behaviors (see title below and accompanying report). Additionally, 2018-2019 data from a middle school shows success in both reading and writing in the Bridges classroom. See our impact flyer for more details.
Intake & Assessment
How do teachers monitor student progress?

INTEGRATED ENL/ELA
A beginning-of-year writing assessment and end-of-year assessment measure growth across the year.
Each unit includes the following assessments for Language, Content, and Writing:
- Pre- and post-unit writing assessment
- Collaborative performance tasks
- Quizzes
Teachers may supplement and adapt as necessary.

STAND-ALONE ENL
We use the Independent Reading Leveled Assessment (IRLA) to monitor progress in:
- Reading comprehension
- Foundational skills
- Specified targets in writing
While designed for native English speakers, we have adapted the IRLA to assess SIFE learners. Other development reading framework, such as Fountas and Pinnell running records, can also be used as long as they are adapted for SDL learners.
How are students graded?

We lean towards competency-based grading based on the learning targets, but you should adapt grades based on your school and district guidelines.
Professional Development
Cohort members receive invitations to professional development trainings six weeks in advance. If you are interested in joining the cohort, please contact admin@bridges-sifeproject.com. If eligible, all new schools must designate a teacher and administrator to complete the Bridges Sheltered ENL/ELA online orientation.

Please check the Bridges Calendar of Events for dates.