

***Aligning
CASAS Competencies
and
Assessments to
Basic Skills
Content Standards***



A Project for the CASAS National Consortium Member States

Part I: Aligning CASAS Competencies and Assessments to Basic Skills Content Standards

Background of the CASAS System

Since its inception, CASAS - Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems, has focused on teaching and assessing basic skills in contexts to which adults can easily relate. Adult learners by nature are pragmatic; they want their learning to be relevant and need to apply what they learn in the contexts of work, family and community life. Because of this, CASAS, in its 28-year history, has developed and continues to refine a highly formalized hierarchy of competencies, the application of basic skills that adults need to be fully functional and productive members of society. This ongoing refinement process is coordinated through the CASAS National Consortium of States to ensure that the system is responsive to a broad and diverse range of adult learners.

The functional contexts of CASAS test items include applied reading, math, and listening in a variety of adult life and work situations. CASAS multiple-choice tests measure basic skills in a functional context for adults and youth and are constructed from item banks of more than 5,000 test items. Each test item has an established difficulty level based on extensive field-testing and analysis. The psychometric methodology used to establish this difficulty level comes from the Rasch model of Item Response Theory (IRT). By this methodology, each test item is assigned a difficulty level on a common scale. Tests constructed from the item banks have been field-tested with adult basic education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, as well as youth and adult high school learners in adult secondary education (ASE). Tests are available at various levels from special education for developmentally disabled adults (Levels 2A-5A) and advancing to adult basic education (Levels A, B, C) through high school completion (Levels D and E). For more descriptive background and psychometric information about CASAS the reader is referred to the CASAS Technical Manuals (Fourth edition, 2008).

The CASAS Competencies form the basis of the CASAS integrated assessment and curriculum management system. They identify more than 360 essential skills that youth and adults need to be successful members of families, communities, and the workforce. These critical competencies provide instructional objectives for curriculum, direct links to test content for monitoring student learning, criteria for program evaluation, and a referencing system for instructional materials. Based on field research – which began in 1980 – and recommendations from education providers, learners, business and industry representatives, and community-based agencies, the competencies have been regularly updated and validated at state and national levels.

CASAS, together with the CASAS National Consortium completed a yearlong competency revalidation process in 2008. The complete updated competencies document, *CASAS Competencies—Essential Life and Work Skills for Youth and Adults 2008*, is available at www.casas.org. The changes update the life and work skills needed by youth and adults in today's society and reflect the increased role of technology in the 21st century. Competency

areas that have been expanded or added include: education, health and medical information, financial literacy, media literacy, and technology.

In 1984, CASAS was validated by the U.S. Department of Education, National Diffusion Network, as an exemplary program in the area of adult literacy and was approved for national dissemination. In 1993, the Program Effectiveness Panel (PEP), the primary mechanism of the U.S. Department of Education for evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs, upheld three claims related to three key elements of CASAS implementation. Specifically, learners within educational programs implementing CASAS (compared to learners in programs not adopting the CASAS key elements):

- Demonstrate significant learning gains
- Demonstrate increased hours of participation
- Achieve increased goal attainment

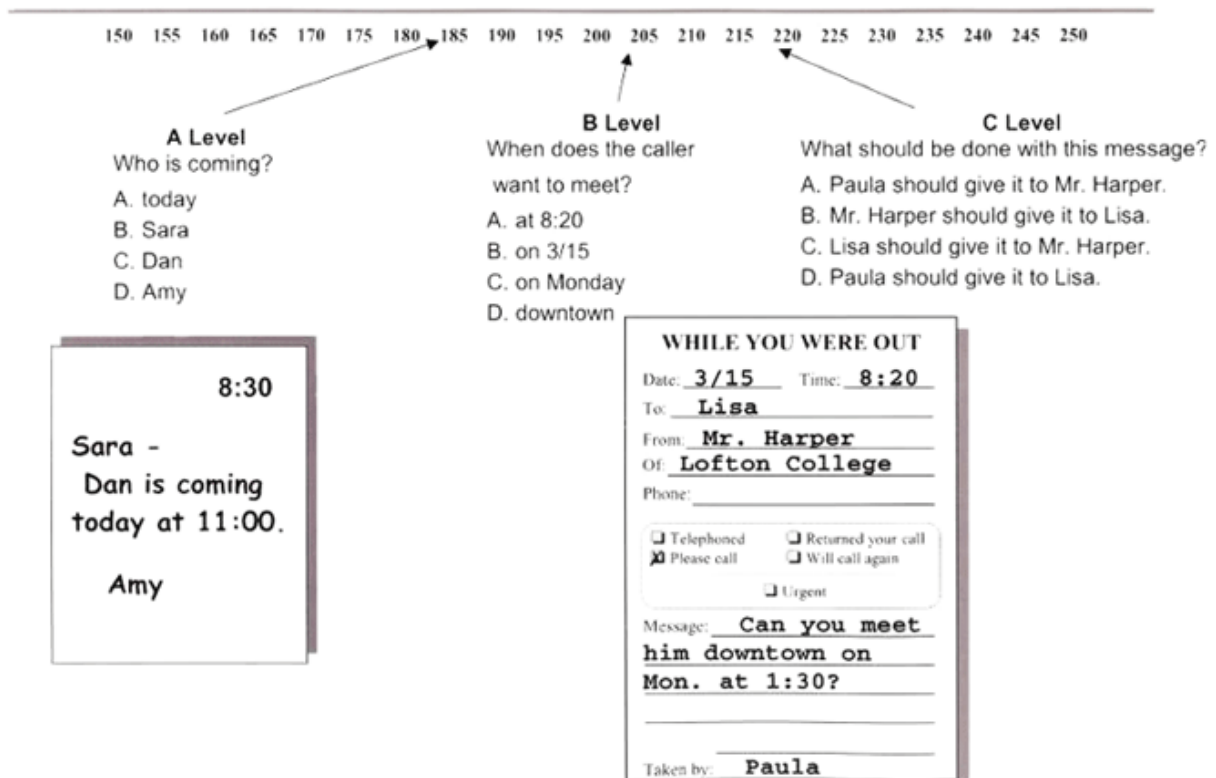
In addition, detailed evidence relating to the validation of identified CASAS competencies is documented from several national studies conducted in California, Iowa, Connecticut, Oregon, and Indiana and demonstrate strong, direct links between CASAS competencies and learner needs as identified by adult learners, teachers, and individuals from business and industry.

CASAS-trained instructors identify the basic skills that are embedded in each CASAS competency and teach those basic skills in contexts that are relevant and critical to the lives of their adult learners. Contexts include generic life, employability and workplace skills, as well as skills needed by individuals to function effectively in the community and as citizens. CASAS assessments measure the *application* of basic skills in the contexts previously discussed while they focus on reading, math, writing, as well as listening and speaking (for limited English proficient learners). These assessments measure the application of those basic skills in contexts that are familiar to adult learners. The comprehensive list of CASAS competencies, the instructional emphasis on teaching these competencies, and the alignment of assessments that measure mastery at the appropriate instructional level work together to create an integrated system for an effective adult basic skills learning continuum.

CASAS has developed seven assessment series – which include 180 standardized assessment instruments – customized to measure specific competencies. Adult education programs can use CASAS assessments to place learners into programs, diagnose learners' instructional needs, monitor progress, and certify mastery of functional basic skills. These instruments can measure functional reading, math, listening, speaking and writing skills in everyday adult life and work contexts. CASAS has validated its assessment instruments with both native and non-native speakers of English.

CASAS test items are based on the application of basic skills in realistic everyday life or workplace contexts. For example, in assessing competency 4.3.2 – *Interpret safe work procedures, safety manuals...* – a test item might involve reading a memo on safe work practices for childcare workers, following steps for safely operating a gas furnace, or identifying safety equipment used in a machine shop. It is important to note that items measuring the same competency can be targeted to one or more instructional levels as illustrated below.

Figure 1 Sample CASAS Reading test items at three levels as measured in CASAS Competency 2.1.7 Take, interpret, and leave telephone messages



CASAS test items can also be presented in a variety of *task types*:

- Forms
- Charts, maps, consumer billings, matrices, graphs or tables
- Articles, paragraphs, sentences, directions, manuals
- Signs, price tags, advertisements or product labels
- Measurement scales or diagrams

Impetus for Developing Content Standards

As in the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) of 2001*, the impending reauthorization of the *Workforce Investment Act (WIA)* stresses the importance of states developing or adapting a content standards continuum to guide the teaching and learning process from adult basic education and English-as-a-second-language through high school completion and beyond. A *Blueprint for Preparing America's Future: The Adult Basic Literacy Education Act of 2003 (United States Department of Education, 2003)* asserts that "Unlike in elementary and secondary education few states have systems of content standards and student assessments for adult basic and literacy education." Limited human and fiscal resources have contributed significantly to this reality. State Boards of Education have been grappling with developing content standards for the K-12 system, a requirement under NCLBA, and have had little time to devote to overseeing the development of standards for adult learners as well. Since the late 80s, CASAS and California have been in the forefront in terms of developing content standards for adult learners. Draft standards have been developed in English-as-a-second language, adult basic education, and adult secondary education. The California draft standards served as a major source—along with additional standards from a variety of other

sources – for this project. The California adult secondary content standards have been aligned to California K-12 standards to ensure that its adult learners mastered the same content requirements. These sets of standards are intended to serve as a content standards framework for the National CASAS Consortium member states. CASAS Consortium members may then adapt these standards to meet the unique requirements in their respective states.

The Importance of Standards-Based Education

The *Blueprint* defines content standards as clear benchmarks of what learners should know and be able to do at specific points as they move through the educational spectrum. Not only does the *Blueprint* prescribe the development of content standards for adults, but it also stresses that states should have assessments that are aligned to those content standards to provide “valid and reliable measures” of the degree to which learners have mastered the skills and knowledge of content standards. The alignment of adult education content standards and assessments is also important to ensure that adults are academically prepared for continuing into post-secondary education and training, as well as employment. The CASAS/GED Correlation Study (2003), a three-year multi-state effort, provided solid evidence that performance on CASAS assessments can be used to predict successful completion of the GED test.

Increasingly, states are issuing formal basic skill “statements of achievement” that document adult learner mastery at prescribed levels of achievement. These “statements of achievement” are especially useful to verify and acknowledge skill level gains for learners lacking a secondary school completion credential. Learners can use these “statements of achievement” as evidence – often for employers – of what skills they have mastered in adult education. Having a formalized hierarchy of content standards clearly strengthens and provides greater delineation as to what basic skills adult learners have mastered upon “statements of achievement” of an educational level.

It is vital that state content standards be aligned with the skills standards workers need to succeed and advance in their careers. State content standards should be developed in concert with national skills standards efforts such as the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC), a partnership of industry (employers, labor unions, employee and employer organizations) and educators and public interest groups who have developed skills standards that have been validated across all manufacturing sectors. CASAS has been actively involved with ensuring that its competencies are aligned with MSSC and other national standards efforts.

CASAS has a considerable history in standards development. In the late 80s and early 90s, the Adult High School Assessment Committee of the CASAS California Consortium developed Adult Secondary Level Standards and standardized assessment based on approved High School Standards for in-school youth. Adult secondary programs developed an alignment between adult high school completion program standards and high school standards for in-school youth. Content-specific tests were developed to ensure that adult learners were able to demonstrate learning comparable to that of in-school youth. These tests are now being aligned to meet current rigorous academic standards. In the early 1990s, the CASAS California Consortium participated in the development of the state Adult ESL

standards. Additionally, CASAS has completed crosswalks between CASAS competencies and other national systems, including the SCANS and O'NET competencies and the National External Diploma Program (NEDP).

The CASAS Content Standards Project, while coordinated overall by CASAS staff, has relied on the invaluable services of the CASAS National Consortium Content Standards Technical Work Group (TWG). The TWG is comprised of three subgroups based on areas of expertise:

- ESL Reading/Listening
- ABE/ASE Reading/Language Arts
- ABE/ASE Mathematics

Each subgroup reviewed the relevant content standards lists, evaluated them for appropriateness and comprehensiveness in addition to other criteria. Each subgroup suggested additional content standards from a variety of sources for possible inclusion. CASAS is indebted to these individuals for their efforts on the CASAS National Consortium's behalf.

The CASAS Basic Skills Content Standards Categories

Section II presents two content standards tables: The CASAS Reading Content Standards by Instructional Level table is followed by the CASAS Listening Content Standards by Instructional Level table.

Nine categories for Reading Content Standards include:

- R1 Beginning Literacy/Phonics
- R2 Vocabulary
- R3 General Reading Comprehension
- R4 Text in Format
- R5 Reference Materials
- R6 Reading Strategies
- R7 Reading and Thinking Skills
- R8 Academic-Oriented Skills
- R9 Literary Analysis

Similarly, six categories for Listening Content Standards include:

- L1 Phonology
- L2 Vocabulary
- L3 Grammar
- L4 General Discourse
- L5 Informational Discourse
- L6 Strategies and Critical Thinking

Content standards for reading and listening are provided in greater specificity under the relevant reading or listening category. This hierarchical system was developed to assist instructors to locate information more quickly. It should be noted that the CASAS content standards development in Part II are in different stages of completion: the Reading Content Standards are in final form as are the Listening Content Standards. The Math Content Standards (v2) are posted at www.casas.org. CASAS envisions that content standards will continue to evolve and be refined, so it is anticipated that minor changes will continue to be

made in the future.

Relationship of CASAS Content Standards to the National Reporting System (NRS)

The tables below show the relationship between the NRS Educational Functioning Levels for ESL and ABE/ASE, the CASAS level identifier (A - E), and the corresponding scale score ranges aligned to the level, and the CASAS level name.

Figure 2 NRS and CASAS Levels for ESL

NRS Levels for ESL	CASAS Test Level	CASAS Scale Score Range	CASAS Level Names
1 -Beginning ESL Literacy	A	180 and below	Beginning Literacy/ Pre-Beginning ESL
2 - Low Beginning ESL	A	181 - 190	Low Beginning ESL
3 - High Beginning ESL	A	191 - 200	High Beginning ESL
4 - Low Intermediate ESL	B	201 - 210	Low Intermediate ESL
5 - High Intermediate ESL	B	211 - 220	High Intermediate ESL
6 - Advanced ESL	C	221 - 235	Advanced ESL
	D	236 - 245	Adult Secondary
	E	246 and above	Proficient Skills

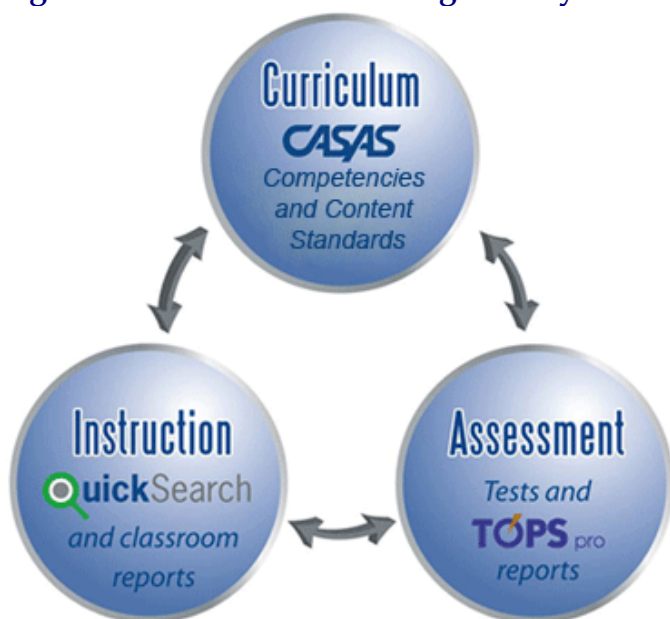
Figure 3 NRS and CASAS Levels for ABE and ASE

NRS Levels for ABE/ASE	CASAS Test Level	CASAS Scale Score Range	CASAS Level Names
1 - Beginning ABE Literacy	A	200 and below	Beginning Literacy/Pre-Beginning
2 - Beginning Basic Education	B	201 - 210	Beginning Basic Skills
3 - Low Intermediate Basic Education	B	211 - 220	Intermediate Basic Skills
4 - High Intermediate Basic Education	C	221 - 235	Advanced Basic Skills
5 - Low Adult Secondary Education	D	236 - 245	Adult Secondary
6 - High Adult Secondary Education	E	246 and above	Advanced Adult Secondary

Using Content Standards

Why should instructors use content standards along with CASAS Competencies? Content standards identify the underlying basic skills associated with CASAS Competencies. Content standards support instructional planning that helps students master a specific competency and attain their goals. Content standards should also be in alignment with CASAS assessments as this is a cornerstone of standards based education. If assessment, content, and instruction are aligned the assumption is that student achievement will improve. A conceptual model for incorporating content standards into a CASAS systems approach is illustrated below:

Figure 4 CASAS - an Integrated Systems Approach to Assessment



Figures 5 through 7 have been designed to help classroom instructors understand the relationship between content standards and CASAS Competencies. They also provide a visual context to help conceptualize this relationship. Two reading examples are followed by an example for listening. These examples show some possible content standards that could be taught or assessed in relation to a specific competency.

Specifically, the first reading example below involves reading rent ads. It relates to competency 1.4.2 - *Select appropriate housing by reading ads, signs, and other information*. The Reading Content Standard R2.7 is needed in order to interpret abbreviations.

The second reading example involves reading a flyer found in a building. This type of reading relates to competency 1.4.7 - *Communicate maintenance needs and housing problems to a landlord or property owner*. The Reading Content Standard R3.5 is needed in order to interpret simple written instructions.

The listening example below involves being able to understand what a landlord might say when a maintenance problem is reported. It relates to competency 1.4.7 - *Communicate maintenance needs and housing problems to a landlord or property owner*. The Listening Content

Standard L3.1 is needed when the listener must be able to comprehend basic grammar and structures with present tense verbs and modals of high-frequency usage (e.g., to be, to do, to need, to have, can).

Figure 5 Mapping an example of Reading to Content Standards and a Life Skills Competency

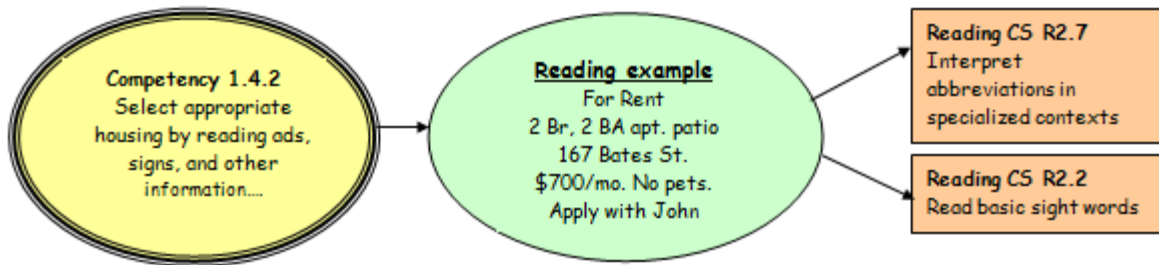


Figure 6 Mapping an example of Reading to Content Standards and a Life Skills Competency

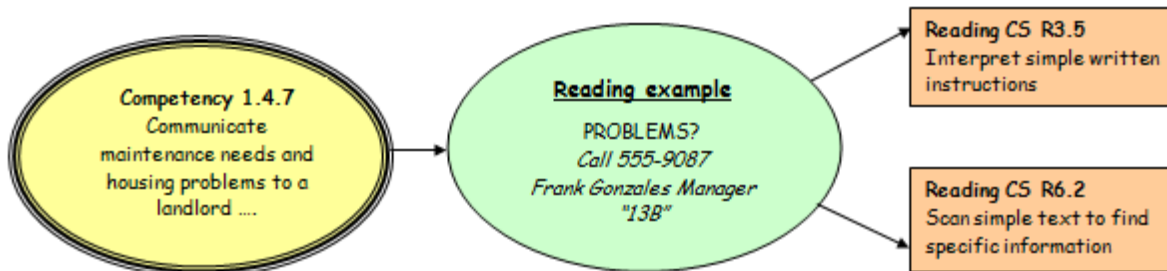
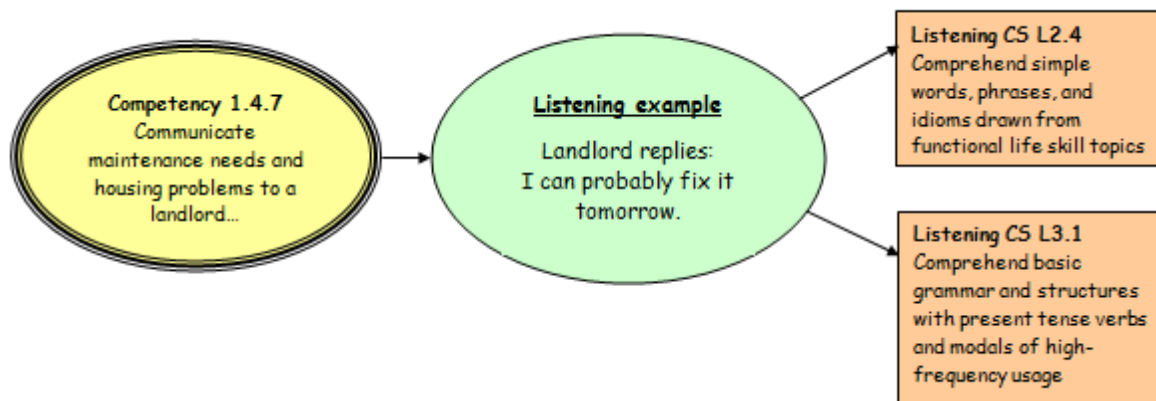


Figure 7 Mapping an example of Listening to Content Standards and a Life Skills Competency



CASAS basic skills content standards also provide guidance to assist states in aligning adult content standards with those of their K-12 counterparts. The tables in Part II, especially at the higher levels of functioning, identify those proficiencies that are essential for a successful

transition from adult high school completion programs (GED, NEDP, and credit-based programs) to post-secondary education and training. Lastly, the content standards in this document provide a clear pathway to help ensure that entry-level workers have the essential skills to be successful in the workplace.

Content standards of the highest quality are not beneficial unless adult educators actually **use** them in the classroom. CASAS staff have developed a variety of teacher-friendly tools to assist instructors as they implement content standards. These tools may be found at www.casas.org. Additionally, TOPSpro provides powerful classroom information for students and teachers to inform instruction. TOPSpro is a software system that tracks student assessment and learner results and provides tools to communicate program effectiveness to adult education and training programs. Recently, TOPSpro has incorporated content standards into its reporting capabilities to assist instructors to identify more easily the basic skills content standards that are assessed in CASAS test items.

For more information about CASAS content standards, please contact Jim Harrison (jharrison@casas.org) at (858) 292-2900 x191.

Part II: CASAS Content Standards for Reading and Listening

The following tables are designed for educators at national, state and local levels to inform the alignment of content standards, instruction and assessment. CASAS does not envision these content standards as a mandate for its users; rather they are intended to provide guidance to states and local adult education agencies that are using CASAS assessments and are considering adapting or adopting content standards for basic skills.

CASAS Content Standards for Reading by Instructional Level provides a key to explain the nine reading categories as well as the relationship to the NRS ESL and ABE/ASE Educational Functioning Levels. Each of the Reading Content Standards is listed under the appropriate reading category. Reading Content Standards are provided for ESL, ABE, and ASE at each CASAS and NRS instruction level.

The *CASAS Content Standards for Listening by Instructional Level* provides a key to explain the six listening categories as well as the relationship to the NRS ESL Educational Functioning Levels. Each of the Listening Content Standards is listed under the appropriate category by CASAS and NRS instructional level.

CASAS Content Standards for Reading by Instructional Level

Categories

R1	Beginning literacy / Phonics
R2	Vocabulary
R3	General reading comprehension
R4	Text in format
R5	Reference materials
R6	Reading strategies
R7	Reading and thinking skills
R8	Academic-oriented skills
R9	Literary analysis

Key to NRS Educational Functioning Levels

ESL						ABE/ASE					
1	Beginning Literacy	1	Beginning Literacy								
2	Beginning Low	2	Beginning								
3	Beginning High	3	Intermediate Low								
4	Intermediate Low	4	Intermediate High								
5	Intermediate High	5	ASE/Low								
6	Advanced Low	6	ASE/High								
	Advanced High										

CS#	Reading Content Standards	NRS Level	ESL						ABE				ASE	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
			A	A	A	B	B	C	D	A	B	B	C	D
		CASAS Level												
R1	Beginning literacy / Phonics													
R1.1	Identify the letters of the English alphabet (upper and lower case)		•	•					•					
R1.2	Recognize that letters make words and words make sentences		•						•					
R1.3	Read from left to right, top to bottom, front to back		•						•					
R1.4	Relate letters to sounds		•	•					•					
R1.5	Relate letters to a range of possible pronunciations, including recognizing common homonyms		•	•	•				•	•				
R1.6	Use common phonological patterns to sound out unfamiliar words (e.g., man/van)		•	•	•				•					
R2	Vocabulary													
R2.1	Interpret common symbols (e.g., restroom signs, traffic signs; #, ►, ↑)		•	•	•				•	•				
R2.2	Read basic sight words (e.g., the, is)		•	•	•				•					
R2.3	Interpret common high-frequency words and phrases in everyday contexts (e.g., signs, ads, labels)		•	•	•	•			•	•				
R2.4	Use capitalization as a clue to interpret words (e.g., names, place names, other proper nouns)		•	•	•				•					
R2.5	Interpret contractions			•	•	•			•	•				
R2.6	Interpret basic abbreviations (e.g., Mr., apt., lb.)			•	•	•			•	•				
R2.7	Interpret abbreviations in specialized contexts (e.g., tsp., bnfts.)					•	•			•	•			
R2.8	Interpret meaning from word formations (e.g., verb endings, plurals, possessives, comparative forms)			•	•	•	•		•	•	•			
R2.9	Interpret common prefixes and suffixes to determine the meaning of words (e.g., un-happy, work-er)				•	•	•		•	•	•			
R2.10	Interpret less common prefixes and suffixes to determine the meaning of words (e.g., impossible, anti-war, employee)						•	•			•	•		
R2.11	Interpret familiar words used in a new context (e.g., enter a room, enter data on a computer)					•				•				

CS#	Reading Content Standards	ESL						ABE				ASE		
		NRS Level						1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	A	B	B	C	D	E	
CASAS Level		A	A	A	B	B	C	D	A	B	B	C	D	E
R2.12	Interpret specialized vocabulary in context (e.g., consumer, work, field of interest)						•	•				•	•	•
R3	General reading comprehension													
R3.1	Interpret common punctuation and sentence-writing conventions (e.g., capitalized first word)	•	•	•					•					
R3.2	Read and understand simple sentences that contain familiar vocabulary		•	•	•				•	•				
R3.3	Read and understand simple texts on familiar topics (e.g., short narratives, basic consumer materials)			•	•				•	•				
R3.4	Read and understand moderately complex texts (e.g., general informational materials, common workplace materials)			•	•	•			•	•				
R3.5	Read and understand complex texts (e.g., newspaper and magazine articles, technical materials, literature)						•	•				•	•	•
R3.6	Interpret simple written instructions		•	•	•				•	•				
R3.7	Interpret detailed instructions (e.g., workplace procedures, operating instructions, consumer materials)						•	•	•			•	•	•
R3.8	Interpret basic sentence structure and grammar (e.g., statements, questions, negatives; adjectives modifying nouns)		•	•	•				•	•				
R3.9	Interpret complex sentence structure and grammar (e.g., relative clauses, perfect tenses)						•	•	•			•	•	•
R3.10	Follow pronoun references within a text (e.g., Ms. Smith... she; This is important.)		•	•	•				•	•				
R3.11	Make connections between related information across different sections of a text						•	•	•			•	•	•
R3.12	Use supporting illustrations to interpret text	•	•	•					•					
R3.13	Use contextual clues to determine the meaning of words and phrases (e.g., Save \$10 on your next purchase.)				•	•			•	•	•			
R3.14	Interpret signal words as clues to the organization and content of a text (e.g., first... then; however; it's important that...)			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
R3.15	Interpret idioms and collocations from context				•	•	•	•		•	•			
R3.16	Interpret figurative meanings of words from context (e.g., flooded with calls)						•	•				•	•	•
R3.17	Interpret the connotative meaning of a word (e.g., inexpensive vs. cheap)						•	•				•	•	
R3.18	Interpret analogies in familiar contexts						•	•				•	•	•
R3.19	Interpret meaning of metaphors and similes in context							•					•	•
R4	Text in format													
R4.1	Read numbers	•	•						•					
R4.2	Read clock times	•							•					
R4.3	Read dates	•	•	•					•					
R4.4	Read money amounts	•	•						•					

CS#	Reading Content Standards	ESL						ABE				ASE		
		NRS Level						1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	
CASAS Level		A	A	A	B	B	C	D	A	B	B	C	D	E
R4.5	Read simple handwriting		•	•	•				•	•				
R4.6	Interpret simple forms (e.g., appointment sign-in sheet, class registration)		•	•	•	•			•	•	•			
R4.7	Interpret complex forms (e.g., rental, insurance, pay statements)					•	•	•			•	•	•	•
R4.8	Interpret information in charts and tables (e.g., bus schedules)		•	•	•				•	•				
R4.9	Interpret maps, diagrams, and graphs			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
R4.10	Interpret written materials using formatting clues (e.g., headings, captions, bullets, print features such as bold)		•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•		
R5	Reference materials													
R5.1	Find a word or number in an alphabetical, numeric, or other ordered listing (e.g., telephone directory, list of part numbers)		•	•					•					
R5.2	Locate information using an index or table of contents (e.g., of a book, manual, computer application help feature)				•	•	•			•	•	•		
R5.3	Locate information organized in groups or categories (e.g., in a department directory, catalog, on a web page)			•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•		
R5.4	Use a picture dictionary	•	•						•					
R5.5	Use a simplified dictionary or glossary		•	•	•				•	•				
R5.6	Use a standard dictionary to distinguish between multiple meanings of a word					•	•	•			•	•	•	•
R5.7	Use reference tools such as a print or online encyclopedia							•					•	•
R6	Reading strategies													
R6.1	Predict the content of a text from title, pictures, type of material		•	•	•	•			•	•	•			
R6.2	Scan simple text (e.g., ads, schedules, forms, paragraphs) to find specific information		•	•	•	•			•	•	•			
R6.3	Scan complex or extended text (e.g., web pages, documents, narratives) to find specific information					•	•	•			•	•	•	•
R6.4	Skim simple text for general meaning				•	•			•	•				
R6.5	Skim complex text for general meaning or to determine subject matter or organization					•	•	•			•	•	•	•
R6.6	Use appropriate reading strategy (e.g., skimming, scanning, predicting, inferring) to understand content of unfamiliar material or specialized information				•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
R6.7	Increase reading fluency (accuracy, speed)				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
R7	Reading and thinking skills													
R7.1	Identify the main idea of a simple paragraph			•					•					
R7.2	Identify the main idea of a multi-paragraph text				•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•

CS#	Reading Content Standards	NRS Level	ESL						ABE				ASE			
			1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6		
			CASAS Level	A	A	A	B	B	C	D	A	B	B	C	D	E
R7.3	Identify supporting points or details for a statement, position or argument on a familiar topic							•	•					•	•	•
R7.4	Determine the sequence of events in a simple narrative		•	•	•					•	•					
R7.5	Determine the sequence of events in a complex narrative					•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•
R7.6	Paraphrase information					•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•
R7.7	Summarize a text					•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•
R7.8	Make inferences and draw conclusions from simple text			•	•	•			•	•	•					
R7.9	Make inferences and draw conclusions from complex text					•	•						•	•	•	•
R7.10	Differentiate fact from opinion in a written text					•	•					•	•			
R7.11	Identify the writer, audience, and purpose of a text					•	•						•	•	•	•
R7.12	Determine a writer's point of view						•							•	•	•
R7.13	Compare related information from various sources (e.g., consumer ads)			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
R7.14	Verify and clarify facts in written information (e.g., advertising claims)					•	•						•	•	•	•
R8	Academic-oriented skills															
R8.1	Critique the logic of functional documents by examining the sequence of information and procedures in anticipation of possible reader misunderstandings														•	•
R8.2	Analyze both the features and the rhetorical devices of different types of public documents (e.g., policy statements, speeches, debates, platforms) and the way in which authors use those features and devices)															•
R8.3	Critique the power, validity, and truthfulness of arguments set forth in public documents; their appeal to both friendly and hostile audiences; and the extent to which the arguments anticipate and address reader concerns and counterclaims (e.g., appeal to reason, to authority, to pathos and emotion)															•
R8.4	Generate relevant questions about readings on issues that can be researched														•	•
R8.5	Prepare a bibliography of reference materials for a report using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents														•	•
R8.6	Extend ideas presented in primary or secondary sources through original analysis, evaluation, and elaboration														•	•
R8.7	Make warranted and reasonable assertions about the author's arguments by using elements of the text to defend and clarify interpretations															•

CS#	Reading Content Standards	ESL						ABE				ASE			
		NRS Level						1	2	3	4	5	6		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	A	B	B	C	D	E		
CASAS Level		A	A	A	B	B	C	D	A	B	B	C	D	E	
R8.8	Evaluate the credibility of an author's argument or defense of a claim by critiquing the relationship between generalizations and evidence, the comprehensiveness of evidence, and the way in which the author's intent affects the structure and tone of the text (e.g., professional journals, editorials, political speeches, primary source materials)													•	•
R8.9	Analyze an author's implicit and explicit philosophical assumptions and beliefs about a subject														•
R8.10	Synthesize the content from several sources or works by a single author dealing with a single issue; paraphrase the ideas and connect them to other sources and related topics to demonstrate comprehension													•	•
R8.11	Analyze the way in which clarity of meaning is affected by the patterns of organization, hierarchical structures, repetition of the main ideas, syntax, and the word choice in the text														•
R9	Literary analysis														
R9.1	Identify the story elements such as setting, character, plot, and resolution													•	
R9.2	Draw from personal experiences in responding to a work of literature (i.e., the learner recognizes similarities between the experiences of fictional characters in non-complex events and his/her own experiences)													•	
R9.3	Identify uncomplicated themes in reading selections													•	
R9.4	Differentiate between factual and fictional elements													•	
R9.5	Identify story elements including setting, plot, character, conflict, and resolution increasingly more complex fiction													•	
R9.6	Identify the function of introductory and concluding paragraphs in an essay													•	
R9.7	Identify cause-and-effect relationships in literary texts													•	
R9.8	Identify the impact of language such as literary devices that are characteristic of an author's work													•	
R9.9	Respond to a work of literature by explaining how the motives of the characters or the causes of events compare with those in his/her life													•	
R9.10	Identify the major theme in increasingly more complex stories													•	
R9.11	Use specifics from literary passages to support his/her ideas formed from reading literary text													•	
R9.12	Identify historical and cultural perspectives in reading selections (i.e., the impact of beliefs, attitudes, and values on a literary work)													•	

CS#	Reading Content Standards NRS Level	ESL								ABE				ASE						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6							
		CASAS Level A	A	A	B	B	C	D	A	B	B	C	D	E						
R9.13	Interpret a work of literature and relate the information to contemporary experiences																			
R9.14	Identify more complex elements of plot, setting, character development, conflict, and resolution																			
R9.15	Recognize universal themes in literature (e.g., tragic hero, man versus nature, triumph over adversity, coming of age)																			
R9.16	Articulate the relationship between the expressed purposes and the characteristics of different forms of dramatic literature (e.g., comedy, tragedy, drama, dramatic monologue)																			
R9.17	Compare and contrast the presentation of a similar theme or topic across genres to explain how the selection of genre shapes the theme or topic																			
R9.18	Determine and articulate the relationship between the purposes and characteristics of different forms of poetry (ballad, lyric, couplet, epic, elegy, ode, sonnet)																			
R9.19	Analyze interactions between main and subordinate characters in a literary text (e.g., internal and external conflicts, motivations) and explain the way those interactions affect the plot																			
R9.20	Determine characters' traits by what the characters convey about themselves in narration, dialogue, dramatic monologue, and soliloquy																			
R9.21	Compare works that express a universal theme and provide evidence to support the ideas expressed in each work																			
R9.22	Analyze and trace an author's development of time and sequence, including the use of complex literary devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashbacks)																			
R9.23	Recognize and understand the significance of various literary devices (figurative language, imagery, allegory, symbolism) and explain their appeal																			
R9.24	Interpret and evaluate the impact of ambiguities, subtleties, contradictions, ironies, and incongruities in a text																			
R9.25	Explain how voice, persona, and the choice of a narrator affect characterization and the tone, plot, and credibility of a text																			
R9.26	Explain how the tone and plot describe the function of dialogue, scene designs, soliloquies, asides, and character foils in dramatic literature																			

CS#	Reading Content Standards	ESL						ABE				ASE			
		NRS Level						1	2	3	4	5	6		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	A	B	B	C	D	E		
CASAS Level		A	A	A	B	B	C	D	A	B	B	C	D	E	
R9.27	Evaluate the aesthetic qualities of style, including the impact of diction and figurative language on tone, mood, and theme, using the terminology of literary criticism (Aesthetic approach)														•
R9.28	Analyze the way in which a work of literature is related to the themes and issues of its historical period (Historical approach)														•
R9.29	Analyze a work of literature, showing how it reflects the heritage, traditions, attitudes, and beliefs of its author (Biographical approach)														•
R9.30	Analyze characteristics of subgenres (e.g., satire, parody, allegory, pastoral) that are used in poetry, prose, plays, novels, short stories, essays, and other basic genres														•
R9.31	Analyze the way in which the theme or meaning of a selection represents a view or comment on life, using textual evidence to support the claim														•
R9.32	Analyze the ways in which irony, tone, mood, the author's style, and the "sound" of language achieve specific rhetorical or aesthetic purposes or both														•
R9.33	Analyze the ways in which poets use imagery, personification, figures of speech, and sounds to evoke readers' emotions														•
R9.34	Analyze recognized works of American literature representing a variety of genres and traditions														•
R9.35	Analyze the way in which authors through the centuries have used archetypes drawn from myth and tradition in literature, film, political speeches, and religious writings														•
R9.36	Analyze recognized works of world literature from a variety of authors														•
R9.37	Evaluate the philosophical, political, religious, ethical, and social influences of the historical period that shaped the characters, plots, and settings of a literary work														•
R9.38	Analyze the clarity and consistency of political assumptions in a selection of literary works or essays on a topic (e.g., suffrage, women's role in organized labor (Political approach)														•
R9.39	Analyze the philosophical arguments presented in literary works to determine whether the authors' positions have contributed to the quality of each work and the credibility of the characters (Philosophical approach)														•

CASAS Content Standards for Listening by Instructional Level

Categories

- L1 Phonology
- L2 Vocabulary
- L3 Grammar
- L4 General Discourse
- L5 Informational Discourse
- L6 Strategies and Critical Thinking

Key to NRS ESL Educational Functioning Levels

- 1 Beginning Literacy
- 2 Beginning Low
- 3 Beginning High
- 4 Intermediate Low
- 5 Intermediate High
- 6 Advanced

CS#	Listening Content Standards	ESL							
		NRS Level		1	2	3	4	5	6
		CASAS Level		A	A	A	B	B	C
L1	Phonology								
L1.1	Recognize and distinguish between the various sounds of English (e.g., vowels, consonants, minimal pairs, rhymes)	•	•	•					
L1.2	Recognize words and sounds when they are modified by adjacent sounds (e.g., final “s”: walks [s] vs. plays [z]; final “-ed”: walked [t] vs. played [d])	•	•	•					
L1.3	Distinguish individual words in connected speech	•	•	•					
L1.4	Distinguish basic stress and intonation patterns in English words and sentences (e.g., rising intonation for yes/no questions, emphasis)	•	•	•					
L1.5	Recognize reduced forms of words and phrases (e.g., <i>gonna, gimme; Did you/Didja, twenty/twenny</i>)				•	•			
L1.6	Recognize location of stress in multi-syllable words (e.g., My <u>á</u> ddress is 312 Date Street. vs. Please <u>á</u> ddr <u>é</u> ss this envelope.)					•	•		
L1.7	Recognize moods, emotions, and attitudes conveyed by pronunciation and stress patterns (e.g., Stress and intonation can change <i>I don't believe it!</i> from an expression of skepticism to an exclamation of surprise.)					•	•	•	
L2	Vocabulary								
L2.1	Comprehend simple words and phrases in basic communication in familiar contexts (e.g., basic courtesies, personal information, survival, emergency)	•	•	•					
L2.2	Recognize letters of the alphabet, letters in words, and numbers when spelled or dictated	•	•	•					
L2.3	Comprehend high frequency words, phrases, phrasal verbs and simple idioms used in a variety of everyday contexts (e.g., everyday conversations, simple descriptions, directions)	•	•	•	•	•			
L2.4	Comprehend simple words, phrases, and idioms drawn from functional life skill topics (e.g., shopping, housing, health, transportation, employment)	•	•	•	•	•			
L2.5	Comprehend homonyms in context (e.g., There's a <u>hole</u> in the bag. / Get a <u>whole</u> bag.)			•	•	•	•		
L2.6	Comprehend words changed by prefixes, suffixes, etc. (e.g., <i>happy/unhappy; govern, government</i>)			•	•	•	•		

CS#	Listening Content Standards	ESL							
		NRS Level		1	2	3	4	5	6
		CASAS Level		A	A	A	B	B	C
L2.7	Comprehend speech that contains unfamiliar vocabulary using contextual clues			•	•	•	•		
L2.8	Comprehend a wide range of vocabulary such as synonyms (e.g., <i>doctor vs. physician</i>), precise terminology (e.g., <i>home vs. duplex apartment</i>), phrasal verbs and idioms (e.g., <i>to be late vs. running behind schedule</i>) on a variety of topics							•	•
L2.9	Comprehend specialized vocabulary (e.g., technical, academic)							•	•
L3	Grammar								
L3.1	Comprehend basic grammar and structures with present tense verbs and modals of high-frequency usage (e.g., to be, to do, to need, to have, can)	•	•	•					
L3.2	Recognize pronouns and follow pronouns across a statement (e.g., <i>Carlos lives with his mother.</i>)	•	•	•					
L3.3	Recognize contracted forms	•	•	•	•				
L3.4	Recognize imperative constructions	•	•	•	•				
L3.5	Recognize negative constructions	•	•	•	•				
L3.6	Distinguish between simple questions (e.g., WH- & yes/no) and statements	•	•	•	•				
L3.7	Recognize noun plurals	•	•	•	•				
L3.8	Recognize the possessive form of nouns and pronouns		•	•	•				
L3.9	Comprehend intermediate level grammar and structures (e.g., simple past, modals, real conditional, present perfect, compound simple sentences)			•	•	•			
L3.10	Comprehend comparative forms of adjectives (e.g., faster, fastest)			•	•	•			
L3.11	Recognize signal words and cohesive devices that give clues to organization and content of message (e.g., <i>first, then, however, it's important that, well, anyway, that being said, etc.</i>)				•	•	•	•	
L3.12	Comprehend comparative forms of adverbs (e.g., <i>more quickly, the most quickly</i>)					•	•		
L3.13	Comprehend advanced grammar and structures (e.g., complex tenses, all conditionals (real and unreal), passive voice, reported speech, compound/complex sentences)					•	•	•	
L3.14	Recognize a range of question types (e.g., embedded questions, tag questions)					•	•	•	
L4	General Discourse								
L4.1	Comprehend simple learned social exchanges	•	•	•					
L4.2	Comprehend simple conversations	•	•	•	•				
L4.3	Comprehend simply expressed states and feelings	•	•	•	•				
L4.4	Comprehend abbreviated forms of speech (e.g., <i>Want some?</i>)			•	•				
L4.5	Comprehend brief non-face-to-face communication (e.g., short phone calls, personal messages)			•	•	•	•		
L4.6	Comprehend extended conversations				•	•	•		
L4.7	Comprehend extended social narrative (e.g., a description of weekend activities)					•	•		

CS#	Listening Content Standards	ESL							
		NRS Level		1	2	3	4	5	6
		CASAS Level		A	A	A	B	B	C
L4.8	Recognize fillers and place holders in speech (e.g., <i>Um, You know, Like</i>)						•	•	
L4.9	Comprehend communicative function of speech (e.g., polite disagreement: <i>Do you really think so?</i>)						•	•	•
L4.10	Comprehend media messages with visual support (e.g., TV news, weather reports, and movies)						•	•	•
L4.11	Comprehend extended or detailed non-face-to-face communication (e.g., phone calls, messages, announcements, radio broadcasts)						•	•	•
L4.12	Understand humor, jokes, irony						•	•	•
L5	Informational Discourse								
L5.1	Comprehend short emergency warnings and commands (e.g., <i>Stop! Wait!</i>)	•	•						
L5.2	Comprehend brief messages (e.g., <i>Your husband called. Ms. Garcia wants to see you right away.</i>)		•	•	•				
L5.3	Comprehend brief non-face-to-face messages or announcements (e.g., <i>The store will close in ten minutes.</i>)		•	•	•				
L5.4	Comprehend simple single-step instructions, explanations, and directions (e.g., <i>Turn off the lights. Put the boxes in the back.</i>)		•	•	•				
L5.5	Comprehend multi-step instructions and directions (e.g., <i>Turn off the lights when you leave and lock the door.</i>)				•	•	•		
L5.6	Comprehend detailed instructions, explanations and directions in a range of contexts (e.g., specialized contexts such as workplace procedures, operating instructions)					•	•	•	
L5.7	Comprehend instructions or requests given tentatively or indirectly (e.g., <i>Why don't you ...? You may want to...</i>)						•	•	
L5.8	Comprehend essential points of topics of special interest (e.g., lectures, speeches, presentations in order to summarize or take notes)								•
L5.9	Comprehend details of descriptive and factual material in narrative form (e.g., lectures, business presentations)								•
L5.10	Comprehend detailed non-face-to-face communication in a wide range of contexts (e.g., teleconferences, recorded lectures, workplace instructions)								•
L6	Strategies and Critical Thinking								
L6.1	Identify the topic, main idea, or gist of brief discourse or information			•	•	•	•		
L6.2	Listen for simple specific details of brief discourse (e.g., <i>What time will the train leave?</i>)			•	•	•	•		
L6.3	Make inferences from simple statements or conversation			•	•	•			
L6.4	Use non-language-based clues to guess meaning (e.g., gestures, situation, relationships, etc.)			•	•	•	•	•	
L6.5	Predict content of discourse types/genre that follow common patterns (e.g., doctor talking to patient, narratives, instructions)			•	•	•	•	•	
L6.6	Demonstrate understanding of hypothetical situations (e.g., <i>You are a patient. What do you say to the doctor?</i>)				•	•	•	•	
L6.7	Determine when clarification is necessary					•	•	•	

CS#	Listening Content Standards	ESL								
		NRS Level		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		CASAS Level		A	A	A	B	B	C	D
L6.8	Identify the main idea or topic of extended discourse							•	•	•
L6.9	Listen for complex detail or several details in extended discourse (e.g., <i>What are the reasons for the company's new policy?</i>)								•	•
L6.10	Make inferences and predictions and draw conclusions from lengthy or complex information								•	•
L6.11	Differentiate fact from opinion								•	•
L6.12	Detect a speaker's direct or indirect purpose or bias (e.g., advertisements, persuasive arguments, political speeches)								•	•
L6.13	Listen critically in order to make informed decisions or formulate opinions								•	•