



# Student Profiles

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## Pedro

### Home language skills

At home, Pedro's parents choose to speak to him in Spanish, and his listening comprehension skills in that language are well developed. However, he speaks in English with his friends from school. He had some basic literacy instruction in Spanish in Kindergarten and first grade.

### Disability

After coming to the U.S., Pedro was identified with autism spectrum disorder as his primary disability and a speech-language disorder as his secondary disability. His largest challenges are behavioral. He talks excessively in class and does not listen to the point of view of other students or his teacher. He shows some unusual behaviors when communicating with others, such as lying on the floor, avoiding eye contact, etc. He also has difficulty processing sensory information and may refuse to participate in classroom activities. Pedro is sensitive to bright lights, loud noises, unexpected changes in activities, or unfamiliar adults being present. Pedro receives most of his instruction in the general education classroom with a small amount of time in a resource room or occupational therapy room if he becomes disruptive.

The speech-pathologist works with him on using social language, taking others' perspectives, and developing more complex language skills (e.g., making inferences). In the general education classroom he carries a behavior plan with an agreed upon set of rules. His teachers sign the checklist included in the plan each day if he has followed the rules and participated in class without disruption. They also provide support following directions and organizing his academic materials. Pedro took the regular state reading and math assessments in grade 3 and met the standards in that year. In grades 4 and 5 he showed increasing difficulty with reading and math content instruction. In math he can decode the words of a word problem but has difficulty identifying the relevant information and working with increasingly complex problems, especially if problems are timed.

### English language development

Pedro has fluency in conversational English speaking and listening but his academic English skills are at an intermediate level. Pedro can decode written text well, but due in part to his disability he struggles to identify the author's or characters' opinions and to make inferences. In listening, his primary difficulty is attending consistently to a speaker's message and interpreting the speaker's point of view. In writing, his vocabulary knowledge is strong, but he only writes in short words and phrases. For these reasons, he continues to score at an intermediate English proficiency level on the state English language proficiency assessment and to be identified as an English language learner. His ESL teacher uses visual supports to supplement new and more abstract vocabulary, particularly for multi-step directions and for text comprehension. He also makes use of language learning programs on the computer because he is motivated by a strong interest in using technology. Yet, it is difficult for Pedro to remain focused on his learning programs, and he often peruses the Internet when he is supposed to be using a language learning program.

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