

# National English Program in Basic Education



## Leveling Guide Cycle 2

Academic support for English language teachers

Phase of expansion



**Fomentar la lectura**  
mejora la educación y la cultura

# National English Program in Basic Education

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# Presentation

**T**he regulating principles established by Article third of the Constitution, as well as the educational transformation encouraged by the 2007-2012 *National Development Plan (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo)* and the objectives outlined in the 2007-2012 *Education Sector Program (Prosedu: Programa Sectorial de Educación)* have established the leading basis to provide direction and sense to the actions in public education policies in Mexico for the coming decades.

Within this framework, and based on the attributions granted by the General Law of Education (*Ley General de Educación*), the Secretariat of Public Education (*Secretaría de Educación Pública*) proposed as one of Prosedu's fundamental objectives to be achieved by 2012 "to raise the quality of education so that students improve their level of educational achievement, have a means of accessing to a better well-being and thus, contribute to the national development".<sup>1</sup> The main strategy for attaining such objective in Basic Education is "to carry out an Integral Reform in Basic Education, focused on the adoption of an educational model based on competencies that corresponds to the developmental needs of Mexico in the XXI century",<sup>2</sup> envisaging a greater articulation and efficiency among preschool, elementary and secondary school.

Prosedu has also established that "the criteria for quality improvement in education must be applied to teacher training, the updating of curricula and syllabus contents, pedagogical approaches, teaching methods, and didactic resources".<sup>3</sup> Simultaneously, Unesco<sup>4</sup> has indicated that educational

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<sup>1</sup> SEP (2007), *Programa Sectorial de Educación*, México, p.11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p.11.

<sup>4</sup> J. Delors et al. (1996), *La educación encierra un tesoro. Informe a la Unesco de la Comisión Internacional sobre la Educación para el siglo XXI*, Madrid, Santillana/Ediciones Unesco, pp. 31 y ss.

systems are to prepare students in order to face the new challenges of a globalized world, in which the contact among multiple languages and cultures becomes more and more common every day. In this context, the educational system is compelled to help students understand the diverse cultural expressions in Mexico and the world.

It is from this perspective that the Secretariat of Public Education acknowledges the necessity to incorporate English as a subject to the curricula of pre-school and elementary education, as well as to make suitable adjustments to the English subject curricula in secondary school, with the purpose of articulating the teaching of this foreign language in the three levels of basic education. By means of this articulation, it is expected that by the time students complete their secondary education, they will have developed the necessary plurilingual and pluricultural competencies to successfully face the communicative challenges of a globalized world, build a broader vision of the linguistic and cultural diversity at a global level, and thus, respect their own culture as well as that of others.

In order to carry out the actions that enable the articulation of English teaching, the Secretariat of Public Education has implemented the National English Program in Basic Education (NEPBE, or PNIEB: Programa Nacional de Inglés en Educación Básica) from which syllabuses for the three levels of basic education are derived. Such syllabuses are devised based on the alignment and standardization of national and international standards, the selection of criteria for teacher training, the establishment of guidelines for the design and evaluation of educational materials, as well as the certification of English language proficiency.

One of the above actions is to organize national academic meetings to strengthen English teachers, in order to provide them with information and technical-pedagogical instructions, aiming at contributing to the necessary measures to be taken for the implementation and generalization of the corresponding four-cycle syllabuses in the National English Program in Basic Education.

**Secretariat of Public Education**

# Introduction

The National English Program for Basic Education (NEPBE) integrates 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of Preschool as well as the six grades of Elementary school in its in-class testing stage 2011-2012. This means that all students, regardless of the grade in which they incorporate to, will attend the English subject with the NEPBE.

This situation represents two different challenges for elementary school teachers. Firstly, they have to generate the proper conditions to operate the NEPBE Syllabuses with equity and quality in all schools in the country. Secondly, they have to make sure that students achieve the purposes of each of the cycles of the NEPBE and the achievement levels established in each grade, despite not having attended the English language subject in the grade(s) prior to the 2011-2012 school period.

For the above reasons this leveling guide for Cycle 2 was developed as part of the ma-

terials that accompany the implementation of the NEPBE in its in-class testing stage. It is intended to provide teachers with:

- A list of basic contents designed to be worked in a minimum of one-and-a-half or two-month period, so that it allows 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> students to achieve the expected levels set in the NEPBE Syllabuses. It also seeks an earlier introduction to the contents of the syllabus of the students' grade in order to guarantee that when finishing Cycle 2, students will have reached the purposes and levels of achievement.
- A set of teaching guidelines and considerations that teachers should take into account when beginning with the teaching of the NEPBE Syllabuses.



## Structure of the Leveling Guide

This guide includes five sections: Purpose of English Language Teaching for Cycle 2, Teaching Guidelines, Basic Leveling Contents of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of Elementary school, Basic Leveling Contents of 4<sup>th</sup> grade of Elementary school, and Introduction to the NEPBE, and an Appendix.

The “Purpose of English Language Teaching for Cycle 2” that are hereto presented correspond to those set in the Cycle 2 of the NEPBE. Their incorporation has the objective of giving teachers basic foundations, which along with their experience and characteristics of their class, they can decide the order and depth in which contents must be taught. Thus, it is guaranteed that during the first month and a half (15 hours-class time) or second month (20 hours-class time) students will get the necessary knowledge to work with the contents of the grade they are in, and consequently reach the achievement levels for Cycle 2 at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade of Elementary school.

The “Teaching Guidelines” are intended to support the teacher in the teaching of leveling contents through a set of methodological strategies that are characterized for being un-

restrictive. Therefore, teachers can use these or the methodology they consider most appropriate, based on the needs, characteristics, and interests of their students.

The “Basic Leveling Contents of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of Elementary school” and “Basic Leveling Contents of 4<sup>th</sup> grade of Elementary school” were defined based on the Syllabuses of Cycle 2, the previous cycle, subsequent cycles, and the levels of achievement. As it is aforementioned, its purpose is to teach in a short period of time the contents of the NEPBE not studied in previous grades. Thus, unlike the contents of the NEPBE distributed in social practices of the language, the leveling contents are organized as follows:

- Contents of **listening comprehension** and **oral production**: listening/speaking.
- Content of **reading comprehension** and **written production**: read/write.
- **Topics for reflection**. These contents are classified into two groups: a) Specific, which correspond to concepts, features, characteristics, and elements of oral and written language of each specific competence; and b) General, which include

concepts and characteristics of oral and written texts, common to all Cycle 2 leveling contents.

The leveling contents lack the dynamic aspects of the social practices of the language, since they do not belong to any particular learning environment. Therefore, **examples and teaching hours** to approach the contents of this guide are presented as **suggestions**; nevertheless, teachers must adapt, change, simplify or expand them according to their planning, char-

acteristics of their students, different variables and conditions that influence the organization of work in class. As a result, this guide offers a space for teachers to write their own methodological considerations and estimated teaching hours to work with the leveling contents.

Finally, the contents regarding the work done with the Program of Cycle 2 are presented in the “Introduction to the NEPBE”; also, a printable planning format is included in the “Appendix” to show a way to plan and organize the class work and contents of this guide.

## Purpose of English Language Teaching for Cycle 2

The purpose of English Language Teaching for Cycle 2 in Basic Education (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades Elementary school) is for students to acquire the necessary knowledge to understand and use English in order to recognize, understand, and use common expressions through the development of *specific competencies* particular to *social practices of the language* related to the production and interpretation of oral and written texts, pertaining to the Familiar and community, Literary and ludic, and Academic and educational environments. At the end of this cycle, the students are expected to:

- Express simple opinions and requests in familiar contexts.
- Recognize basic instructions, information and advertisements. Identify basic aspects of pronunciation and vocabulary used in everyday life contexts.
- Use expressions to refer to personal aspects and needs.
- Respond to spoken and written language in different linguistic and non-linguistic ways.
- Use different strategies to solve everyday problems as well as to look for information about concrete topics.
- Identify similarities and differences of cultural expressions between their own and the English language.
- Establish basic social contact by means of their linguistic repertoire.

## Teaching Guidelines

To use this guide, the following guidelines are suggested:

- Know the group of students, in order to determine their interests, previous language knowledge, particularly English, as well as other characteristics that may affect their performance during the leveling sessions.
- Check and comprehend the Program of Cycle 2 in order to keep the sequence of this guide. The Syllabuses are the referent for solving doubts about the contents and teaching suggestions included in this guide. It is also convenient to examine the achievements in order to identify what is expected from these leveling sessions, as well as the “doing with the language” and “knowing about the language” that students need to review or study in depth considering the grades where English was not taught.
- Based on the previous information, select the order in which the contents will be taught as well as the teaching hours suggested for each one; bear in mind both, the total of hours suggested for leveling and the needs of the group.
- Review and analyze the examples provided in this guide for the teaching of contents. Take into account that these only represent one of the many ways in which they can or should be approached. Therefore, teachers should be aware that they are not designed to rule the organization and planning of class work, so it may be necessary to make any adjustments depending on the needs of students. It is important to mention that in the case of literary texts (songs, stories, legends, etc.), it was only possible to present sample texts; however, it is expected that students participate in the reading of complete texts. Since it is the first time students are in contact with the English language at school, texts should be presented mainly orally, and later on, through written texts.
- Choose from the list of permanent and specific topics for reflection in this guide, only those which are relevant to the contents. It is important to highlight that the topics for reflection in the leveling ses-

sions **should not be the focus of attention**, since they do not promote the acquisition of the necessary skills to achieve the objectives of Cycle 2. **This guide does not include lists of vocabulary nor strategies to teach** since it is impossible to consider all texts in which vocabulary can be taught.

- **Consider** the convenience of adopting the suggestions given to address the contents.

These do not appear in any specific order and can be used to work on one or more specific competencies.

- **Assess the progress** and achievements of students, as well as changes or adjustments to the components of the teaching practice. Even though **assessment** involves students' promotion, its main function is **formative**.



# Basic leveling contents of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Elementary school

Listening/speaking	Reading/writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and recite words used in greeting, courtesy and farewell expressions.</li> <li>• Follow and give instructions related to everyday school and family life.</li> <li>• Locate school objects and places at school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write greeting, farewell and courtesy expressions.</li> <li>• Participate in the writing of everyday school and family life instructions, with visual aids.</li> </ul>

**Specific topics for reflection**

**Features and types of oral and written texts**

- Differences of intonation between questions and answers.

**Phonic, syntactic and semantic elements of the texts**

- Grammar: modal verbs (*can, may, could, etc.*), personal pronouns (*I, she, he, etc.*).

**Suggested examples**

**Example 1**

- Good morning, José.
- Good morning, mom.
- Make your bed before you leave, please.
- Sure, mom.

**Example 2**

- Hi! Good afternoon. Excuse me. Can you please tell me where the bathroom is?
- Sure. The bathroom is right here, between this classroom and the basketball court.
- Thank you so much.
- You're welcome.

**Example 3**

- Hello, Pedro and María. Could you help me with these books?
- Yes, Miss Rocío.
- Put a book on each desk, please.
- OK, Miss Rocío.
- Thank you.

**Teacher's examples**

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Listening/speaking	Reading/writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the reading of a children's story.</li> <li>• Identify and express moods, facts or experiences.</li> <li>• Spell words in a story.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete sentences in a story.</li> <li>• Identify sections or parts of a story.</li> </ul>

**Specific topics for reflection**

**Features and types of oral and written texts**

- Parts of a book: cover, undercover, flaps, etc.
- Graphic and textual components: title, author, paragraphs, illustrations, text, pages, etc.
- Structure and elements of a story: opening, body and ending, characters.

**Mechanics of writing**

- Conventional letter-sound correspondence.

**Suggested examples**

*The Frog Prince* (extract)

One fine evening, a young and happy princess put on her hat and dress, and went out to take a walk in a wood. She came to a cool spring of water to rest a while. She had a golden ball, which was her favorite toy; and she was always playing with it.

After a while she threw her golden ball so high that she missed catching it. The ball went far, until it fell into the spring. The princess looked into the spring after her ball, but it was very deep. She began to cry, and said, "I am so sad and desperate! If I get my ball again, I will give all my dresses and jewels, and everything that I have in the world".

**Teacher's examples**

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**Teaching suggestion**

- Explore a children's story, with the help of visual aids and non-verbal language.
- Follow the reading aloud of children's story and perform the characters' actions (get dressed, walk, rest, etc.).
- Identify the opening, body and ending.
- Find similarities and differences between the characters' actions and others' (students, acquaintances).
- Find and identify words that indicate moods, facts and experiences.
- Identify basic parts or elements that form words or sentences.
- Participate in the writing of words that indicate moods, facts and experiences.
- Complete lists of actions performed by the characters and others (acquaintances).

**Teacher's suggestions**

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Minimum time suggested: 3-4 hours Time suggested by the teacher: \_\_\_ hours

Listening/speaking	Reading/writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give and receive personal information (name, activity, occupations, etc.), preferences (food, colors, sports) and one's own and others' physical appearance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and record personal information (name, activity, occupation, etc.), preferences (food, colors, and sports) and one's own and others' physical appearance.</li> </ul>

**Specific topics for reflection**

Phonic, syntactic and semantic elements of the texts

- Type of sentences (statements, questions, etc.).
- Grammar: personal pronouns (*I, you, me, her, us*, etc.), question words (*who, what, where*, etc.).

**Suggested examples**

Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What is your name?</li> <li>– My name is Alfredo.</li> <li>– How old are you?</li> <li>– I am 8 years old.</li> <li>– Where do you live?</li> <li>– I live in... with my parents. / My address is...</li> <li>– What do your parents do?</li> <li>– My mother is a nurse and my father is a carpenter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What sport do you like?</li> <li>– I like to play table tennis.</li> <li>– What is your favorite color?</li> <li>– What is your favorite food?</li> <li>– I love rice with peas and carrots.</li> <li>– My favorite color is brown.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Who is she?</li> <li>– She is Clara.</li> <li>– How old is she?</li> <li>– She is 27 years old.</li> <li>– Where does she work?</li> <li>– She works here in the school. She is the music teacher.</li> <li>– Where does she come from?</li> <li>– She is from...</li> </ul>

**Teacher's examples**

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**Teaching suggestions**

- Explore dialogues in which personal information, preferences and one's own and others' physical appearances are expressed, with the help of visual aids and non-verbal language.
- Identify while listening, question words.
- Identify while listening, words that refer to personal information, preferences and one's own and others' physical appearance.
- Identify new vocabulary words and find their meaning in bilingual dictionaries and/or with teacher's help.
- Play transmitter and intended audience's roles.
- Complete orally dialogues with questions and answers about personal information, preferences, and one's own and others' physical appearance.
- Participate in the writing of words and sentences about personal information, preferences and one's own and others' physical appearance.

**Teacher's suggestions**

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*Minimum time suggested: 3-4 hours*
*Time suggested by the teacher: \_\_\_ hours*





Listening/speaking	Reading/writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give and receive information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and record information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings, with the help of visual aids.</li> </ul>

**Specific topics for reflection**

Phonic, syntactic and semantic elements of the texts

- Type of sentences (statements, questions).
- Grammar: prepositions (*in, about, on, etc.*), personal pronouns (*I, you, me, her, us, etc.*), question words (*who, what, where, etc.*), modal verbs (*do, would, could, etc.*).

**Suggested examples**

- Hi. We are looking for *Los Chapulines* restaurant. Do you know where it is?
- Sure, it's near here.
- Can you tell us how to get there?
- Sure. Walk five blocks and turn right. Then, walk two blocks and turn left. You will see a hospital. *Los Chapulines* is in front of the hospital.
- Is the food expensive?
- No. The food is cheap and it's pretty good.
- Thank you very much.
- You're welcome.

**Teacher's examples**

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**Teaching suggestions**

- Explore dialogues in which information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings is exchanged, with the help of visual aids and non-verbal language.
- Identify while listening, words about one's hometown natural sites and buildings.
- Recognize new vocabulary and find its meaning in bilingual dictionaries and/or with teacher's help.
- Play transmitter and intended audience's roles.
- Complete orally dialogues with question and answers about one's hometown natural sites and buildings.
- Participate in the writing of words and sentences that give information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings.

**Teacher's suggestions**

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Minimum time suggested: 3-4 hours | Time suggested by the teacher: \_\_\_ hours





## Basic leveling contents of 4<sup>th</sup> grade Elementary school

Listening/speaking	Reading/writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret and recite greeting, farewell and courtesy expressions.</li> <li>• Follow and give instructions about every day school and family life activities.</li> <li>• Locate objects and places at school.</li> <li>• Identify and understand expressions to get what is wanted or needed from others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write greeting, farewell and courtesy expressions.</li> <li>• Complete dialogues to get what is wanted or needed from others, with the help of visual aids.</li> </ul>

### Specific topics for reflection

#### Features and types of oral and written texts

- Differences of intonation between questions and answers.

#### Phonic, syntactic and semantic elements of the texts

- Grammar: personal pronouns (*I, you...*), phrasal verbs (*wake up, turn off, etc.*), modal verbs (*could, would, etc.*).

### Suggested examples

Example 1	Example 2	Example 3	Example 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Good morning, girls and boys.</li> <li>– Good morning, Miss Estela.</li> <li>– Please, hand in your homework.</li> <li>– Yes, Miss Estela.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Hi, Pepe. What are you doing?</li> <li>– Hello, dad. I am coloring a map.</li> <li>– Very well. Turn off the lights when you finish.</li> <li>– Yes, dad.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Hello, Andrés.</li> <li>– Hi, Miss Daniela.</li> <li>– Do you know where the history books are?</li> <li>– The history books are on the bookshelf, next to the blackboard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Andrés, could you help me carry these books, please?</li> <li>– Of course. Where shall I place them?</li> <li>– Over there, next to the desk.</li> <li>– There you are.</li> <li>– Thank you so much, Andrés.</li> <li>– You are welcome, Miss Daniela.</li> </ul>















Listening/speaking	Reading/writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give and receive information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the writing of dialogues in which information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings is exchanged.</li> </ul>

**Specific topics for reflection**

Features and types of oral and written texts

- Structure of dialogues: opening, body, ending.

Phonic, syntactic and semantic elements of the texts

- Verb tenses: present and future.
- Type of sentences: (statements, questions, etc.).
- Grammar: prepositions (*in, about, on, etc.*), personal pronouns (*I, you, me, her, us, etc.*), question words (*who, what, where, etc.*), modal verbs (*do, would, could, etc.*).

**Suggested examples**

- Good morning, I think I'm lost. Do you know where the Museum of Modern Art is?
- Yes.
- Is it far from here?
- Not that much. Walk until you find the convenience store, when you get there, walk three blocks to the right, there is a bakery at the corner, will see the bus stop in front of it. Any bus driving by will take you to the Museum of Modern Art.
- Thank you very much!
- You're welcome. You will get there in 15 minutes or so.

**Teacher's examples**

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**Teaching suggestions**

- Explore dialogues in which information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings is exchanged, with the help of visual aids and non-verbal language.
- Identify while listening, information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings.
- Identify new vocabulary and find its meaning with bilingual dictionaries and/or with teacher's help.
- Play transmitter and intended audience's roles.
- Complete orally dialogues with information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings.
- Participate in the writing of sentences with information about one's hometown natural sites and buildings.

**Teacher's suggestions**

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Minimum time suggested: 3-4 hours Time suggested by the teacher: \_\_\_ hours

In addition to the specific topics for reflection suggested, the ones listed below are expected to be included in the contents since they help contextualize and give meaning to the specific competencies.

For example, *Graphic and textual components* are a necessary knowledge that helps to *Follow the reading of a children's story* or *Record basic information about a science-related topic in a chart*.

### Permanent topics for reflection

#### Features and types of oral and written texts

- Structure, topic, purpose and intended audience of oral and written texts.
- Graphic and textual components.
- Contextual clues: non-verbal language (gestures, body language, signs and movements, glances, etc.).

#### Phonic, syntactic and semantic elements of the texts

- Acoustic characteristics: volume, tone, rhythm.
- Repertoire of words necessary for this social practice of the language.
- Differences in letter-sound correspondences between the mother tongue and the target language.
- Types of sentences: statements, questions.
- Verb tenses.

#### Mechanics of writing

- Conventional letter-sound correspondence.
- Conventional writing of words: without additions, substitutions or omissions.
- Upper and lower-case letters.
- Punctuation.

## Introduction to the NEPBE

The social practices of the language are the same for the two grades in Cycle 2; however, there are variations in the presentation of contents of the “Specific competencies”. Thus, teachers may start teaching the social practice of the language in Unit 1, either the Familiar and community environment “Talk and write to participate in everyday dialogues” or the Literary and ludic environment “Read and sing songs”; or else, they can start teaching the social practice of the language in Unit 2, Academic and educational environment “Give and receive instructions to elaborate objects and record information” or Familiar and community environment “Offer and receive information about one’s self and acquaintances”.

The “Doing with the language” and “Knowing about the language” of these practices are included in this guide for the two school grades, but the

level of depth and complexity is what differentiates one from the other. Consequently, regardless of the practice of the language chosen to start teaching, students will be working with all contents of the unit; therefore, working with the NEPBE will be a familiar practice. However, when teaching the contents of the NEPBE, it is necessary to consider the following:

- Pay attention to the development of receptive communicative skills in the social practices.
- Take into account that topics for reflection are cyclical throughout the specific competencies; therefore, there are several opportunities to work with them in context.
- Emphasize the development of being through the language contents that haven’t been taught (interculturality, attitudes, values, collaborative work, etc.).

## Appendix. Planning format

Listening/speaking	Reading/writing
Specific competencies	Specific competencies
Topics for reflection	
Specific	
General	
Texts	
Suggestions to approach the contents	
Time suggested by the teacher: ___ hours	



