

# Speech and Language Evaluation Scale Second Edition (SLES-2)

Stephen B. McCarney  
Samm N. House

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The *Speech and Language Evaluation Scale- Second Edition (SLES-2)* was developed to aid in screening, identification, and program planning for children and adolescents with speech and/or language problems in school. The **SLES-2** is based on the most commonly recognized definition of communication disorders by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) (1993). Each subscale is associated with one of the most commonly recognized characteristics of speech and language disorders.

The **SLES-2** Speech subscales are

- Articulation,
- Voice, and
- Fluency.

The **SLES-2** Language subscales are

- Form,
- Content, and
- Pragmatics.

The **SLES-2** is a renorming of the *Speech and Language Evaluation Scale* (McCarney, 1989). It was standardized on 2,573 students 4 through 18 years of age. Separate norms are provided for males and females. The demographic characteristics of the standardization population closely represent those of the nation for gender, race, residence, geographic area, and occupation of parents.

Internal consistency reliability of the **SLES-2** was .98 for the total score. Test-retest reliability for the total score was .79 and inter-rater reliability was .93. Content, construct, and criterion-related validity are reported.

Each item on the **SLES-2** is rated using a four-point scale from (0) NEVER to (3) ALWAYS. The **SLES-2** takes a rater familiar with the child or youth approximately 20 minutes to complete. Following completion, four types of scores may be obtained: frequency rating for individual items (reflecting the degree of success demonstrated for a communication skill), subscale standard score, quotient, and percentile. Using the subscale standard scores, a profile of the student's level of speech and language functioning across the subscales can be constructed.

The *Speech and Language Classroom Intervention Manual* (206 pages, © 1990) includes goals, objectives, and intervention strategies for the communication skills on the scale and is designed for the convenient development of the student's IEP, as well as classroom intervention. The **SLES-2 Quick Score** is a Windows®-compatible computer program that converts raw scores to standard, quotient, and percentile scores.

The **SLES-2** complete kit includes the **Pre-Referral Speech and Language Checklists (50)**, **Intervention Strategies Documentation Forms (50)**, **SLES-2 Technical Manual**, **SLES-2 Rating Forms (50)**, and the **Speech and Language Classroom Intervention Manual**.



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# SCHOOL VERSION RATING FORM

Diane R. Fressola and Sandra Cipponeri Hoerchler

## RATING GUIDELINES

- The student should be rated by educational personnel with primary observational opportunities who work directly with the student in school situations.

0

NEVER

This quantifier indicates that the student does not exhibit the speech/language problem indicated on the scale. It would be rare or accidental if the student exhibited the speech/language problem.

- The rater should randomly select students from their classroom. For example, the rater may choose to rate every 5th student on their class roster. Handicapped students who are randomly selected to be rated should not be excluded.

1

SOMETIMES

This quantifier indicates that the student sometimes, but not often, demonstrates the speech/language problem on the scale. It indicates that the student has the ability to perform the speech/language skill and does not demonstrate the problem most of the time.

- Should the rater have no knowledge of the student's ability to perform a particular item on the scale, he/she may consult other school personnel (e.g., teacher, counselor, etc.) to provide information for that item.

2

OFTEN

This quantifier indicates that the student often, but not always, demonstrates the speech/language problem on the scale. The student has some ability, but most of the time exhibits the problem.

- The rater should rely on his/her observation of the student's speech/language as it occurs naturally in the school environment.

- It is recommended that the rater read each quantifier with the item before rating the item. Using item 10 as an example, the rater would first read "Rate of speech is NEVER too fast or too slow" then "Rate of speech is SOMETIMES too fast or too slow" then "Rate of speech is OFTEN fast or too slow" and finally, "Rate of speech is ALWAYS too fast or too slow."

3

ALWAYS

This quantifier indicates that the student consistently exhibits the speech/language problem indicated by the item. It may be that the student has not developed the skill or has no ability to successfully perform the skill. It would also be used when an item is not an age appropriate skill and the student would not be expected to be able to exhibit the skill at his/her age (e.g., reading, writing, etc.). If the student exhibits an item that he/she would not be expected to exhibit at his/her age, rate the item based on his/her ability.

- It is not necessary to complete the rating of a student in one day. Several days may elapse before the rater is able to complete the scale.

IMPORTANT \*\*\* PLEASE NOTE: \*\*\* IMPORTANT

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SLES-2

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**TO RATER:** Rate every item using the quantifiers (0-3) provided.  
Every item must be rated. **Do not leave any boxes blank.**

NEVER

0

SOMETIMES

1

OFTEN

2

ALWAYS

3

ARTICULATION

- 0 1. Substitutes one sound for another sound (e.g., "The ball is wed." for "The ball is red.")
- 1 2. Omits a sound in a word (e.g., "Pay the piano." for "Play the piano.")
- 0 3. Inserts extra sound in a word (e.g., "Stit down." for "Sit down.")
- 3 4. Distorts or mispronounces words or sounds when speaking (not attributed to dialect or accent)
- 1 5. Demonstrates difficulty imitating speech sounds
- 0 6. Shows signs of frustration when he/she is frequently misunderstood
- 1 7. Demonstrates difficulty sequencing speech sounds in multisyllabic words (e.g., student says "ephelant" instead of "elephant")
- 0 8. Articulation interferes with daily communication
- 1 9. Speech causes unfavorable listener reaction (i.e., substitutions, omissions, insertions, mispronunciations, etc., make it unpleasant to listen to the student)
- 1 10. Rate of speech is too fast or too slow

8 Raw Score

VOICE

- 0 11. Voice quality sounds harsh, breathy, and/or hoarse
- 0 12. Voice quality sounds hypernasal (e.g., sounds like the student is talking through his/her nose) or hyponasal (e.g., sounds like the student has a cold)
- 0 13. Voice is intermittent or completely lost
- 1 14. Voice volume is too loud or too soft for the situation
- 0 15. Voice pitch is too high or too low for age and gender
- 0 16. Voice quality interferes with daily communication (i.e., the student is difficult to understand because of voice quality)
- 0 17. Voice quality causes unfavorable listener reaction (i.e., voice is so harsh, breathy, and/or hoarse as to make it unpleasant to listen to the student)
- 0 18. Shows signs of frustration because of vocal quality (e.g., becomes anxious, upset, angry, etc.)

1 Raw Score

FLUENCY

- 0 19. Flow of speech is interrupted during conversation by part word repetition (e.g., student says, "I want some wa-wa-water.")
- 0 20. Flow of speech is interrupted during conversation by whole word repetition (e.g., student says, "I want-want-some water.")
- 0 21. Flow of speech is interrupted during conversation by prolongations (e.g., student says, "I want ssssssome water.")

- 1 22. Flow of speech is interrupted during conversation by interjections (e.g., student says, "I want uh-uh-uh-some water.")
- 0 23. Secondary characteristics are present while speaking (e.g., eye blinking, jaw jerking, lip rounding, flaring of nostrils, slapping body or table with hand and/or other jerky body movements, and limited or nonexistent eye contact)
- 0 24. Dysfluency interferes with daily communication (e.g., dysfluencies make it difficult for the student to be understood)
- 0 25. Dysfluent speech causes unfavorable listener reaction (e.g., dysfluencies make it unpleasant to listen to the student)
- 0 26. Shows signs of frustration because of dysfluent speech (e.g., becomes anxious, upset, angry, etc.)

1 Raw Score

FORM

- 1 27. Uses inappropriate subject-verb agreement when speaking (e.g., says, "It don't matter to me." instead of "It doesn't matter to me.")
- 1 28. Uses sentences which are grammatically incomplete when speaking (e.g., "Ball under the table." instead of "The ball is under the table.")
- 0 29. Forms questions inappropriately when speaking (e.g., "Billy not here today?")
- 1 30. Uses incorrect word order when speaking (e.g., "Got me my mom a new bike." instead of "My mom got me a new bike.")
- 1 31. Uses pronouns incorrectly (e.g., "Me will go home now." instead of "I will go home now.")
- 1 32. Uses inappropriate verb tenses when speaking (e.g., past, present, future)
- 1 33. Omits present progressive when speaking (e.g., "Bobby walk to school today." instead of "Bobby is walking to school today.")
- 3 34. Speaks only in short, simple sentences which lack complexity
- 3 35. Uses incorrect grammar when writing not attributed to dialect (If the student is not yet writing, rate this item 0.)
- 3 36. Composes incomplete sentences or expresses incomplete thoughts when writing (If the student is not yet writing, rate this item 0.)
- 1 37. Uses negation inappropriately when speaking (e.g., "He no come to my house." instead of "He didn't come to my house.")
- 1 38. Omits function words when speaking (e.g., "He sits on box." instead of "He sits on the box." or "He not here." instead of "He is not here.")
- 1 39. Uses plurality incorrectly in noun and verb forms (e.g., mans/men, geoses/geese, "The boys is climbing the tree.", etc.)

NEVER

0

SOMETIMES

1

OFTEN

2

ALWAYS

3

- 1 1. Uses incorrect grammar when speaking (not attributed to dialect)
- 3 2. Writes only simple, short, noncomplex sentences (If the student is not yet writing, rate this item 0.)

22 Raw Score

- 1 16. Demonstrates difficulty comprehending passive sentence form (e.g., "The boy was being followed by his sister. Was the sister in front?")
- 0 17. Demonstrates difficulty understanding nonliteral forms of speech such as idioms, proverbs, similes, metaphors, jokes, puns, and riddles

34 Raw Score

## CONTENT

- 1 3. Demonstrates difficulty grasping concepts involving time, space, quantity, quality, and directionality (e.g., before/after, above/below, most/least, smooth/rough, and left/right)
- 1 4. Demonstrates difficulty understanding directions and/or carrying out instructions and often requires repetition or rephrasing
- 3 5. Demonstrates difficulty comprehending picture and/or verbal absurdities (e.g., cannot explain what is wrong when given a picture or a verbal statement such as "The miniature dog is as big as a horse.")
- 3 6. Demonstrates a limited expressive and/or receptive vocabulary
- 3 7. Demonstrates inappropriate (or inaccurate) sequencing skills when speaking (e.g., does not relate information in the correct order, including events in a day and/or rote-type activities such as counting)
- 3 8. Expresses incomplete thoughts when speaking (e.g., speaks in incomplete sentences, fails to think of correct words to express ideas, etc.)
- 3 9. Demonstrates difficulty solving math word problems even though his/her computation skills are adequate (If the student is not yet performing math word problems, rate this item 0.)
- 3 10. Demonstrates difficulty understanding what he/she reads even though he/she has adequate word attack skills (If the student is not yet reading, rate this item 0.)
- 3 11. Demonstrates difficulty understanding and using synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms (e.g., pretty/beautiful, up/down, and sea/see)
- 3 12. Demonstrates difficulty understanding analogies (e.g., Hot is to cold as up is to down.)
- 3 13. Demonstrates difficulty recognizing and using multiple-meaning words (e.g., "The fly is on the wall." and "I will fly home.")
- 1 14. Demonstrates difficulty understanding the meaning of words indicating a question (e.g., who, what, when, why, and how)
- 3 15. Demonstrates difficulty describing objects or events across several dimensions including category, function, composition, similarities/differences, and other attributes

## PRAGMATICS

- 0 18. Demonstrates difficulty generalizing information from one situation to another (e.g., identifies the word "house" on a flashcard, but is unable to identify it in a sentence; can count by fives, but cannot count nickels; knows that  $6 \times 8 = 48$ , but cannot understand that  $48 \div 6 = 8$ ; etc.)
- 0 19. Demonstrates difficulty pretending, role-playing, and imagining
- 1 20. Lacks spontaneity, originality, and/or variety in verbal interactions
- 1 21. Fails to make relevant responses and/or is slow to respond (e.g., When asked "What is your name?" the student may respond "I'm fine.")
- 1 22. Uses inappropriate verbal and/or nonverbal language in social situations or interactions with peers and/or adults
- 1 23. Demonstrates difficulty expressing logical and reasonable responses to questions (e.g., problem solving, making decisions, making inferences)
- 1 24. Demonstrates difficulty expressing opinions, feelings, and/or emotions
- 1 25. Demonstrates difficulty asking for assistance or clarification, when necessary, after receiving directions and/or attempting work independently
- 0 26. Demonstrates difficulty using ritualistic greetings/closings when appropriate (e.g., "Hello," "Good-bye")
- 1 27. Demonstrates difficulty understanding cause-and-effect relationships (e.g., If you oversleep, you will be late for school.)
- 1 28. Demonstrates difficulty with topic initiation, maintenance, and/or closure including irrelevant, tangential, or associative responses; and/or tends to circumlocute - talking "around" instead of "on" the topic
- 1 29. Demonstrates difficulty using verbal language as a tool to obtain desired results

9 Raw Score

# SCHOOL VERSION RATING FORM

Diane R. Fressola and Sandra Cipponeri Hoerchler

## PROFILE SHEET

Name of student: Sam A. Thomas Gender: M

School: Benton Elementary

Class: all subjects Grade: 4

City: Wheeler State: CO

Date of rating: 2015 5 24  
(year) (month) (day)

Date of birth: 2004 10 19  
(year) (month) (day)

Age at rating: 10 7 5  
(years) (months) (days)

Rated by (observer's name): M. Jackson

Dates during which observation of student occurred:  
From August 2014 To May 2015

Amount of time spent with student:  
Per day 5 hours Per week 25 hours

SUMMARY OF SCORES			
Subscales	Raw Score	Standard Score (Appendix A)	Standard Score SEM (Appendix C)
<b>SPEECH:</b>			
Articulation	8	5	1.60
Voice	1	10	2.40
Fluency	1	10	1.56
<b>LANGUAGE:</b>			
Form	22	1	1.96
Content	34	1	1.46
Pragmatics	9	5	1.74

TOTAL SCORE				
Sum of Subscale SS	Quotient (Appendix B)	Percentile (Appendix B)	Quotient SEM (Appendix C)	Confidence Interval (Chapter 2)
32	71	3	5.20	95%

Standard Scores	SUBSCALES						Quotients	Quotient	Percentiles	Percentile Rank
	Speech			Language						
	Articulation	Voice	Fluency	Form	Content	Pragmatics				
20	•	•	•	•	•	•	150	•	≥99	•
19	•	•	•	•	•	•	145	•	95	•
18	•	•	•	•	•	•	140	•	90	•
17	•	•	•	•	•	•	135	•	85	•
16	•	•	•	•	•	•	130	•	80	•
15	•	•	•	•	•	•	125	•	75	•
14	•	•	•	•	•	•	120	•	70	•
13	•	•	•	•	•	•	115	•	65	•
12	•	•	•	•	•	•	110	•	60	•
11	•	•	•	•	•	•	105	•	55	•
10	•	•	•	•	•	•	100	•	50	•
9	•	•	•	•	•	•	95	•	45	•
8	•	•	•	•	•	•	90	•	40	•
7	•	•	•	•	•	•	85	•	35	•
6	•	•	•	•	•	•	80	•	30	•
5	•	•	•	•	•	•	75	•	25	•
4	•	•	•	•	•	•	70	•	20	•
3	•	•	•	•	•	•	65	•	15	•
2	•	•	•	•	•	•	60	•	10	•
1	•	•	•	•	•	•	55	•	5	•
	•	•	•	•	•	•	50	•	≤1	•

Important: Before using this scale, read the section titled *Rating Guidelines* on page one.

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# PRE-REFERRAL SPEECH AND LANGUAGE CHECKLIST

Diane R. Fressola and Sandra C. Hoerchler

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Observed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer's position: \_\_\_\_\_ Student known to observer: \_\_\_\_\_

(from) (to)

Length of time each day with student: \_\_\_\_\_  
(hours) (minutes)

Special education services the student has received: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade(s) repeated: \_\_\_\_\_ Reason (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

How well the student is known by the observer (indicate type of interactions): \_\_\_\_\_

TO OBSERVER: Check each behavior you have observed the student demonstrate during the past month.

## ARTICULATION

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Substitutes one sound for another sound (e.g., "The ball is wed." for "The ball is red.")     | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Demonstrates difficulty sequencing speech sounds in multisyllabic words (e.g., student says "ephelant" instead of "elephant")                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Omits a sound in a word (e.g., "Pay the piano." for "Play the piano.")                        | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Articulation interferes with daily communication   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Inserts an extra sound in a word (e.g., "Stit down." for "Sit down.")                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Speech causes unfavorable listener reaction (i.e., substitutions, omissions, insertions, mispronunciations, etc., make it unpleasant to listen to the student) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Distorts or mispronounces words or sounds when speaking (not attributed to dialect or accent) | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Rate of speech is too fast or too slow  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Demonstrates difficulty imitating speech sounds   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Shows signs of frustration when he/she is frequently misunderstood                            |  |

## VOICE

11. Voice quality sounds harsh, breathy, and/or hoarse

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## IV. Goals, Objectives, and Interventions

### 1 Substitutes one sound for another sound

#### Goals:

1. The student will improve his/her articulation skills.
2. The student will improve his/her discrimination of speech sounds.
3. The student will improve his/her production of speech sounds in isolation.
4. The student will improve his/her production of speech sounds in syllables.
5. The student will improve his/her production of speech sounds in words.
6. The student will improve his/her production of speech sounds in sentences.
7. The student will improve his/her production of speech sounds in spontaneous speech.

#### Objectives:

1. The student will discriminate between correct and incorrect production of the target sound in \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_ trials.
2. The student will imitate correct production of the target sound in isolation in \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_ trials.
3. The student will imitate correct production of the target sound in words in \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_ trials.
4. The student will spontaneously produce the target sound in words in \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_ trials.
5. The student will spontaneously produce the target sound in sentences in \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_ trials.
6. The student will spontaneously produce the target sound in conversational speech in \_\_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_\_ trials.

#### Interventions:

**1.** Have the student's hearing checked if it has not been recently checked.

**2.** Evaluate the appropriateness of requiring the student to accurately produce certain sounds (e.g., developmentally, certain sounds may not be produced accurately until the age of 8 or 9).

**3.** Speak to the student to explain what he/she needs to do differently (e.g., use the /r/ sound instead of the /w/ sound). The teacher should be careful to use the sound that is being targeted and not the letter name (e.g., /r/ not /ar/).

**4.** Reinforce the student for correct productions of the target sound: (a) give the student a tangible reward (e.g., classroom privileges, line leading, passing out materials, five minutes free time, etc.) or (b) give the student an intangible reward (e.g., praise, handshake, smile, etc.). Initially, each correct production may need reinforcement. As the student progresses, more random reinforcement may be adequate.

**5.** Be sure that the student can hear the difference between the sound as it should be made (target sound) and the way he/she is producing it incorrectly (error sound).

**6.** Have the student raise a hand or clap hands when he/she hears the target sound produced during a series of isolated sound productions (e.g., /s/, /sh/, /r/, /m/, /r/, /t/, /k/, /r/, /z/, /w/, /n/, /r/, etc.).

**7.** Use a puppet to produce the target and error sounds. The student earns a sticker for correctly distinguishing a set number of correct/incorrect productions the puppet makes.

**8.** Have the student stand up each time he/she hears the target sound produced accurately in contrast to the error sound (e.g., /w/, /r/, /r/, /w/, /w/, /w/, /r/, /r/, etc.).

**9.** Have the student show "thumbs up" each time the target sound is produced accurately when a picture is labeled and "thumbs down" if the target sound is produced inaccurately.