



# PLS™-5 Screening Test *for* Early Childhood Educators



## *Sergio, age 5 years, 10 months*

Sergio is a creative, artistic child who loves bright colors. He is the youngest child in his family of five. His family has lived in the U.S. for two generations, and he speaks both Spanish and English. Sergio's kindergarten classroom includes children who speak both Spanish and English. Sergio appears to be comfortable speaking either language and mixes both when talking with others.

At the beginning of the school year, Sergio's teacher conducted speech and language screenings to

- obtain an idea about how much English the children know,
- identify children who need additional support in the classroom to learn English, and
- identify children who may need to be referred to a speech-language pathologist.

Through a comprehensive assessment, a speech-language pathologist can determine if the child is a typically-developing bilingual child or if the child is demonstrating signs of difficulty in speech and language development.

The teacher has training in administering and scoring standardized assessments and uses the PLS-5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators to screen speech and language skills for English-speaking children. She works with a Spanish-speaking aide to screen children who speak only Spanish and children who speak Spanish and English\* with the PLS-5 test.

Since the teacher speaks only English, she works closely with the Spanish-speaking aide in her classroom. The teacher has provided the aide with training on the rules of administration (e.g., administering all the language items in Spanish first, then re-administering the missed items in English), scoring the open-end language test items using the criteria for correct and incorrect answers in the manual, and scoring the articulation section of the test.

\* The PLS-5 is only used with children who speak Spanish because the scores are based on a population of children who speak Spanish, not on a population of children who speak English, or English and another language.



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# Sergio's Performance on the PLS™ -5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators

## Language Section

*Sergio was able to do the following language tasks:*

**Language Task 1—Understands complex sentences.** Sergio identified the correct picture for 1a, but missed 1b and 1c when the sentences were presented in Spanish. When the missed items were administered in English, he correctly identified the correct picture for 1b. With two correct answers (one in Spanish; one in English), Sergio earned a score of 1.

**Language Task 2—Names or points to a picture that does not belong.** When this task was administered in Spanish, Sergio correctly identified the items that do not belong, naming the items in English, not Spanish. Because he named the correct pictures, the aide did not have to re-administer the screening items in English. Sergio earned a score of 1.

**Language Task 3—Names described object.** Sergio correctly named “pelota” and “toalla” in Spanish. Because the criterion is two correct answers, the aide did not have to administer 3c (“crayones”) and Sergio earned a score of 1.

**Language Task 4—Answers questions about hypothetical events.** The teacher administered the items 4a and 4b in Spanish, and Sergio gave correct answers (in English) to both. Because it is acceptable for the child to respond in English to items administered in Spanish, the teacher did not need to administer item 4c or re-administer the items in English since Sergio met the criterion of two correct answers to earn a score of 1.

*The following task was scored “0.”:*

**Language Task 5—Repeats sentences.** Sergio omitted or changed a word or word ending for sentences in Spanish and English. Because he did not repeat any of the sentences verbatim, this item was scored “0.”

The pass criterion for the language section of the screening is “score of 4 or more items correct.” Sergio earned a score of 4, so he passed the language section of the screening.

## Articulation Section

In the articulation section of the screening, Sergio made only one error on the sounds that are tested: He said the following sounds correctly: “p, j, r, s, l, k, n, ñ, d.” He said “fores” for “flores.” Because he said nine out of ten sounds correctly, Sergio met the criteria of eight or more sounds correct to pass the articulation section of the screening.

## Social/Interpersonal Section

The teacher checked all six socially appropriate communication behaviors in the social/interpersonal section, such as “Greet you when you say “hi,” “Responds to your questions,” and “Speaks to other children.” With a pass criterion of four or more statements checked, Sergio (with six statements checked) passed the social/interpersonal section of the screening.

## Stuttering Section

The teacher selected the description “Occasionally repeats part of a word.” Because no atypical characteristics (such as “Frequently repeats part of a word” or “Pauses excessively when talking”) were selected, Sergio met the pass criteria of “No atypical characteristics noted” in the stuttering section of the screening.

## Voice Section

The teacher selected the description “Voice sounds like other children of the same age and sex.” Because no atypical characteristics (such as “Voice sounds hoarse, rough, or breathy” or “Coughs or clears throat often”) were selected, Sergio met the pass criteria of “No atypical characteristics noted” in the voice section of the screening.

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## Screening Test Summary

### Screening Summary

Check only one box for each section. If the child does not meet the pass criteria, check "Refer for Additional Testing."

Section	Pass	Refer for Additional Testing
Language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articulation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connected Speech	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social/Interpersonal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stuttering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Screening Summary for Sergio, age 5 years, 10 months

In the notes section, the teacher observed that Sergio is very comfortable speaking Spanish and English. While he makes occasional grammatical errors in English, he is performing much like the other children in his class. A review of Sergio's classroom work shows that he is performing at grade level. She feels that continued exposure to English in reading and language arts will help polish his English skills. Over the next few months, the teacher will informally monitor expressive language and consult with the speech-language pathologist to help determine if Sergio has made progress in English grammar or if further assessment may be warranted.

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