General Overview of the CASAS Life & Work Reading Tests

Test content & use—NOT about specific test administration or scoring procedures
Agenda

• What is the CASAS L & W R?
• Where are resources for the CASAS L & W R?
• What does the CASAS L & W R look like?
• What are the differences between CASAS L & W R and CELSA?
• What have we learned from our pilot testing?
• How will we use the CASAS L & W R?
• Why are we doing this?
What is the CASAS L & W R? : definitions

• CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System
  – lots of different kinds of tests, tracking software, competency lists, training about assessment etc.

• L & W R = Life and Work Reading
  – one of the oldest & widely used CASAS tests
  – approved by the feds for NRS reporting for 7 years
  – used for ESL (and ABE and ASE, but not yet in IL)
What is the CASAS L & W R?

• Life skills READING test
• Competency based
• 5 different prompt types:
  – Forms
  – Charts, maps, consumer billings, matrices, graphs, tables
  – Stories, articles, paragraphs, sentences, directions, or pictures
  – Signs, price tags, ads, product labels
  – Measurement scales & diagrams
• From NRS level 1-6
  – in IL from Levels 2-6, = ESL 40- ESL 60, maybe beyond
What is the CASAS L & W R?

- Paper & pencil OR computer based test, interchangeable
- 25 students per proctor
- Appraisal (paper & pencil, 25, items, 25 minutes) OR locator (CAT) taken ONCE by a continuing student
- 2 student practice items
- 4 different levels, A (lower) - D (higher),
  - each with 2 forms
  - + 2 overlaps, each with 2 forms,
  - ABOUT one hour
What is the CASAS L & W R?

• Each test level = different questions & different number of questions
• Scale scores NOT raw scores = need for conversion
• Suggested NEXT test based upon scale score
• Generally, per 70-100 hours of instruction, according to CASAS = approximately
  – 5 point gain at lower levels
  – 3 point gain at higher levels
Where are resources for the CASAS L & W R?

CASAS web site—www.casas.org
- for competency list, textbook correlations, sample test items, on-line further information & training, web-based training

Practice tests at
• **Home** » **Products and Services** » **Sample Test Items** » Life and Work Reading Sample Test Items

OR
• [https://www.casas.org/home/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.showContent&MapID=3229](https://www.casas.org/home/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.showContent&MapID=3229)
  - Need to create a free account with username & password
2. Where is she going?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Into the store</th>
<th></th>
<th>Into the post office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Into the bank</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Into the library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What does the CASAS L & W R look like?—A Level test
What does the CASAS L & W R look like?—B Level test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>Ext.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Alves</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Franconi</td>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monica Tan</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanya Menon</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How do you talk to Monica Tan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>call extension 316</th>
<th></th>
<th>go to Sales Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. What is delaying the next repairs on the elevator?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The elevator company has not responded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>The technicians are not available now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>The parts needed are not in stock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>The exact problem needs to be identified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What does the CASAS L & W R look like?—D Level test

See Sample Test Items—from Reading, Level D, page 5

“Coffee—to Drink or Not to Drink?”
### What are the differences between CASAS L & W R and CELSA?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>CASAS L &amp; W R</th>
<th>CELSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test type</td>
<td>Reading only Competency Based</td>
<td>Reading, Structure, Grammar Structure &amp; Holistic Basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test form</td>
<td>Appraisal OR locator + Prompt of 5 types + 4 MC choices 4 levels, 2 overlaps, 2 forms each Paper &amp; pencil + scantron OR CBT</td>
<td>3 Stories/Dialogues, cloze-type, 4 choices 2 forms Paper &amp; pencil + scantron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test time</td>
<td>About an hour for test</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Grant performance pre/post testing</td>
<td>Placement, transition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What have we learned from our pilot testing? (April 30)

• 10 programs in Illinois, including Truman, Daley, Elgin, COD, ALL-OCC, CLC
• 25 students per program (CLC = 22 from ESL 38, 3 from ESL 58)
• Generally most students were high beginning +, few advanced students yet
• NO significant correlation between students’ most recent CELSA score & CASAS L & W R pre-test score
• Most CLC pilot students scored into higher class (one or two levels) using CASAS recommendations than using CELSA, but not all.
What have we learned from our pilot testing?

See *ESL Assessment Table*.
How will we use the CASAS L & W R?

• We will continue to use BEST Plus for lowest level for placement and pre-testing.
• For the first year, we propose to use CASAS L & W R ONLY for pre/post grant reporting for this year.
• Testing staff will administer and select appropriate post CASAS tests.
• CELSA will be used for initial placement.
• Teacher recommendation and/or highest CELSA score for subsequent placement.
• IEPR will run correlation studies between CELSA and CASAS.
How will we use the CASAS L & W R?

• Teachers will only help prepare students for post CASAS testing and proctor as needed and as possible.

• Teachers can find practice tests at www.casas.org.

• Teachers can find sample reading materials in All-Star texts (and others—see CASAS suggestions).

• Teachers can request CELSA testing in order to facilitate transition and placement decisions.
How will we use the CASAS L & W R?

On Thursday, May 6, FT ESL faculty met to discuss the pilot data and made the following recommendations to Mary Charuhas et al on Friday, May 7:

- **CASAS L & W R** be used for grant required pre/post test reporting **ONLY** for the first year of use, or until sufficient correlation or relational data is available.
- **continued use** of highest score on CELSA as a placement instrument (including placement of subsequent class when teacher recommendation is not available) for at least one year. Faculty will be able to request CELSA in-class testing from AE testing.
- discussion with IEPR to set up and run CELSA/CASAS correlation studies throughout the year.
- funding of in-house outcome based exit criteria to guide teacher recommendation and lessen use of CELSA for this purpose.
- continued, ongoing consideration—Suzanne will present information about CASAS to any interested AE faculty (and other interested parties). If there is strong opposition to continuing to use CELSA as placement during this period, and/or a better plan is suggested, Suzanne will bring the matter back to FT faculty for their consideration.
Why are we doing this?

- Because we have to (federal requirements for federal & state $)
- Because IL ESL Taskforce needed to make a fast decision to find a test usable by large programs, without sufficient knowledge
- Because the test covers all NRS levels & may eventually lead to easier transition to ABE
- Because it’s better than many alternatives
- Because IL ESL Taskforce has not yet had time to implement or consider other choices