



ACTFL LISTENING AND READING COMPUTER ADAPTIVE TEST FAMILIARIZATION GUIDE



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What Is the L&RCAT?

The ACTFL L&RCAT® is the Internet-Based Test (iBT) Computer Adaptive version of the ACTFL English Listening and Reading Proficiency Tests (ACTFL LPT® and ACTFL RPT®). L&RCAT stands for “Listening and Reading Computer Adaptive Testing.” It is a dynamic test that selects test items based on what it learns about the candidate’s proficiency from the candidate’s answers to questions. From the perspective of the test taker, the texts and oral passages in the ACTFL L&RCAT seem to be tailored to the test taker’s own listening and/or reading ability.

Compared to static multiple-choice tests that are traditionally used for listening and reading tests, the ACTFL L&RCAT requires fewer test items to determine the candidate’s ability level, making it efficient in terms of both time and effort.

The ACTFL L&RCAT is delivered by computer or tablet via the internet. Each full test (with both the Listening and Reading sections) presents up to 20 total passages with a maximum of 10 passages for the candidate to listen to, or read, respectively. Each listening passage or reading text has three multiple-choice questions. Each test will end as soon as the test taker has answered a sufficient number of questions for the program to determine the candidate's proficiency level. For the reading component, the maximum duration is 50 minutes; for the listening component, the maximum duration is 45 minutes.

The goal of the ACTFL L&RCAT is to assess general Interpretive Listening and Reading proficiency, rather than what has been learned in a specific program. Test item audio and reading passages are drawn from a variety of sources in the language being assessed. The items include a range of informal and formal speech on general, social, and academic topics, such as daily interactions, reports, discussions, and broadcasts, and they vary in genre, content, length, and complexity depending on the test form selected. Test item topics may include business and economics, politics and current events, education, science and technology, arts and entertainment, and other areas.

The ACTFL L&RCAT can measure Interpretive Listening and Reading abilities in relation to one of three proficiency taxonomies, depending on the type of language proficiency certification needed:

- The ACTFL Proficiency Scale as described in the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2024—Listening*
- The Interagency Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptors
- The Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR)

The ACTFL L&RCAT was developed in partnership with the Institute for Test Research and Test Development. It provides valid and reliable listening and reading proficiency assessment in a format that allows hundreds of candidates to take the test online at the same time. Online

access means that an ACTFL L&RCAT can be completed on demand from anywhere in the world, and at a time that is convenient for both the candidate and the proctor.

The ACTFL L&RCAT has a rigorous validity argument, constructed using content-related, criterion-related, and construct-related evidence.

Language Testing International (LTI) is the exclusive licensee of ACTFL assessments. As such, the L&RCAT, like all ACTFL assessments, is available only through LTI.

What is the format of the L&RCAT?

Each full test (with both the Listening and Reading sections, combined) may contain up to 20 total passages, with a maximum of 10 passages for the candidate to listen to, or read, respectively. Each listening or reading passage has three multiple-choice questions. There is a maximum amount of time allotted to answer the questions associated with a passage. The time depends on the difficulty/length of the passage. A count-down clock on the page tells candidates how much time they have before the program automatically advances the test to the next task.

What are L&RCAT Tasks Like?

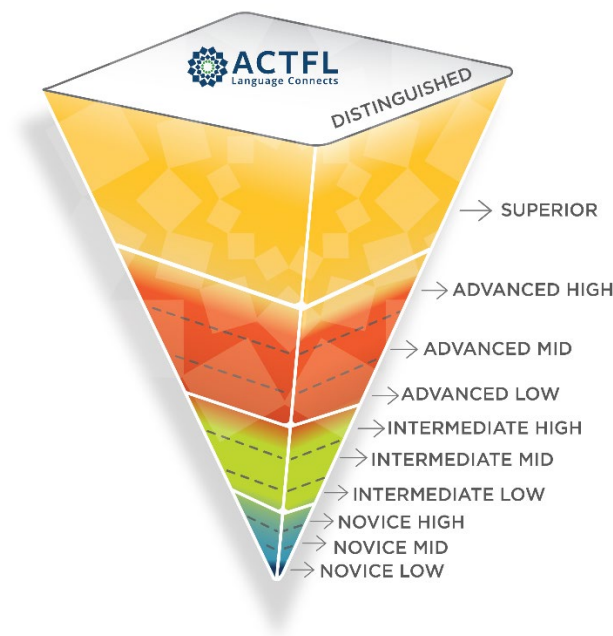
Each task contains a listening or reading passage with three questions, each followed by multiple-choice response items about the passage.

The task presentation for the Listening portion of the test has four phases. In the first phase, the title of the passage and the questions pertaining to the passage appear. This gives the test taker time to become familiar with the topic and the questions before he or she hears the passage. The passage is then played, and, while it is played, the test taker is instructed to take notes on a notepad that is provided within the test. When the passage ends, there is a five-second period to review notes before the multiple-choice options to the questions appear.

A variety of texts are presented in the target language for the Reading portion of the test. They vary in genre, content, length, and complexity depending on the proficiency level targeted. These are real-world types of texts ranging from informal notes, e-mails, letters, and announcements to short, technical reports, excerpts from literary texts, articles, and commentaries. The texts cover social, academic, and professional topics. Each text is followed by three questions with multiple-choice response items. Each question has four possible answers; only one answer is correct. The questions target the main idea, supporting detail(s) and, for some texts, the inferences and connections the test taker can make from the content and organization of the text.

What does the L&RCAT Assess, and what are the Assessment Criteria?

The ACTFL L&RCAT assesses listening and reading in terms of proficiency, that is, the ability to understand language effectively and appropriately in situations the listener/reader has not practiced or encountered previously, as outlined in the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2024—Listening* and the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2024—Reading*. The *Guidelines* characterize the development of language proficiency as a continuum with five major levels: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, and Distinguished; ACTFL assessments evaluate proficiency at all levels through Superior. As shown in the inverted pyramid, each level represents a range of ability (what an individual can do with language) that includes all of the prior levels.



Listening

Listening is an interpretative skill. Listening comprehension is based largely on the amount of information listeners can retrieve as well as the inferences and connections they can make from listening to spoken language produced by one or multiple speakers under a variety of circumstances.

The primary distinction between the levels is the functions and tasks (**F**) that an individual at that level can accomplish. With effort and exposure to the language over time, an individual

develops the degree of accuracy (**A**) and control of context and content (**C**) and text type (**T**) that are required to accomplish increasingly complex functions and tasks. An individual's level of proficiency is thus defined by the four **FACT** criteria:

- **Functions and tasks:** The types of listening activities that the individual can carry out, such as recognizing spoken words and phrases, following oral instructions, or interacting with professional colleagues in a meeting.
- **Accuracy:** The degree to which the individual can use linguistic features (including grammar and syntax, vocabulary, stress and intonation, discourse structure, sociocultural knowledge, and more) to process aural messages.
- **Context and content:** The situations or circumstances in which the individual can achieve listening goals, and the topic areas that the individual is able to handle.
- **Text type:** The length and complexity of aural text that the individual can understand and process, ranging from words and phrases to sentences, paragraphs, and multi-paragraph discourse.

These assessment criteria are evaluated holistically based on the test taker's overall performance. A proficiency rating is awarded based on how evidence of all the criteria contributes to the description of a listener's global proficiency.

Table 1 summarizes the assessment criteria as they relate to the first four major proficiency levels.

Table 1. Assessment Criteria for Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior Levels

Proficiency Level	Global Tasks and Functions	Context & Content	Text Type	Accuracy
Novice	Can derive meaning by recognizing key words and formulaic phrases that are highly contextualized and have been rehearsed	The most common informal settings <i>Most common aspects of self and daily life</i>	Individual words, lists, phrases, and some limited formulaic information	Primarily relies on vocabulary to derive meaning from aural messages. Has great difficulty distinguishing sounds and tones (in tonal languages) that differ from those of other known languages May derive meaning by recognizing structural patterns that have been practiced in familiar contexts

Intermediate	<p>Can follow oral input related to familiar, routine tasks such as understanding announcements, instructions, directions, and other highly contextualized messages</p> <p>Can comprehend simple stories and short descriptive messages within familiar contexts</p>	<p>Routine informal settings and limited tasks involving the exchange of simple information</p> <p><i>Familiar, predictable topics related to self and daily routines and activities</i></p>	<p>Understands sentence-level utterances and some longer discourse</p>	<p>Has sufficient control of the structures and conventions of oral language to understand short, non-complex messages on familiar topics</p> <p>Can recognize when clarification is needed or miscommunication occurs.</p> <p>Generally relies heavily on knowledge of familiar cultural norms and expectations</p>
Advanced	<p>Can comprehend the main idea and supporting details of narrative, descriptive, and straightforward persuasive oral discourse in all major time frames.</p> <p>Can follow when narration or conversation includes an unexpected turn of events</p>	<p>Informal settings and some routine formal settings</p> <p><i>Topics of personal and general interest.</i></p>	<p>Understands connected, cohesive discourse of at least a paragraph in length.</p> <p>Can extend to two or more paragraphs on familiar topics</p>	<p>Can fully understand complex and descriptive discourse with connected language and cohesive devices</p> <p>Understands most language spoken in standard dialect and at normal speed; has difficulty understanding rapid spoken language and non-standard accents/dialects</p>
Superior	<p>Can follow reasoned oral argumentation expressed through supported opinion, conjecture, and hypothesis</p> <p>Can process oral communication that deals with abstract concepts, contains cultural references, and uses specialized vocabulary and complex grammatical structures</p> <p>Can understand formal and informal spoken language on general social and professional topics, and can comprehend linguistically complex extended discourse</p>	<p>Most informal and formal settings</p> <p><i>Practical, professional, and social topics treated both concretely and abstractly</i></p>	<p>Understands clearly organized and articulated oral discourse that can extend from several paragraphs to extended discourse</p>	<p>Understands widely used idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and the cultural norms and expectations that commonly apply in routine and professional speech</p> <p>Understands the mood, feeling, emotion, or stance expressed in oral communication, including emotional overtones such as irony, sarcasm, or humor</p>

Reading

Reading is an interpretative skill. Reading comprehension is based largely on the amount of information readers can retrieve from a text as well as the inferences and connections that they can make within and across texts, and under different circumstances.

The primary distinction between the levels is the functions and tasks (**F**) that an individual at that level can accomplish. With effort and exposure to the language over time, an individual develops the degree of accuracy (**A**) and control of context and content (**C**) and text type (**T**) that are required to accomplish increasingly complex functions and tasks. An individual's level of proficiency is thus defined by the four **FACT** criteria:

- **Functions and tasks:** The types of reading activities that the individual can carry out, such as recognizing words and phrases, following written instructions, or reading and critiquing articles written by professional colleagues.
- **Accuracy:** The degree to which the individual can use linguistic features (including grammar and syntax, vocabulary, stress and intonation, discourse structure, sociocultural knowledge, and more) to process written messages.
- **Context and content:** The situations or circumstances in which the individual can achieve reading goals, and the topic areas that the individual is able to handle.
- **Text type:** The length and complexity of written text that the individual can understand and process, ranging from words and phrases to sentences, paragraphs, and multi-paragraph texts.

These assessment criteria are evaluated holistically based on the test taker's overall performance. A proficiency rating is awarded based on how evidence of all the criteria contributes to the description of a reader's global proficiency.

Table 1 summarizes the assessment criteria as they relate to the first four major proficiency levels. (The ACTFL RPT does not assess reading ability at the Distinguished level.)

Table 1. Assessment Criteria for Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior Levels

Proficiency Level	Global Tasks and Functions	Context & Content	Text Type	Accuracy
Novice	Can derive meaning by recognizing key words and formulaic phrases that are highly contextualized and have been encountered previously	The most common informal settings <i>Most common aspects of self and daily life</i>	Individual words, lists, phrases, and some limited formulaic information.	Primarily relies on vocabulary to derive meaning from written messages. May derive meaning by recognizing structural patterns that have been practiced in familiar contexts.

Intermediate	Can follow written input related to familiar, routine tasks such as understanding announcements, instructions, directions, and other highly contextualized messages. Can comprehend simple stories and short descriptive messages within familiar contexts.	Routine informal settings and limited tasks involving the communication of simple information. <i>Familiar, predictable topics related to self and daily routines and activities.</i>	Understands sentence-level structures and some longer texts.	Has sufficient control of the structures and conventions of written language to understand short, non-complex texts on familiar topics. Can recognize when understanding is incomplete. Generally relies heavily on knowledge of familiar cultural norms and expectations.
Advanced	Can comprehend the main idea and supporting details of narrative, descriptive, and straightforward persuasive text in all major time frames. Can follow when narration or description includes an unexpected turn of events.	Informal settings and some routine formal settings. <i>Topics of personal and general interest.</i>	Understands connected, cohesive discourse of at least a paragraph in length. Can extend to two or more paragraphs on familiar topics.	Can fully understand complex and descriptive discourse with connected language and cohesive devices.
Superior	Can follow reasoned argumentation expressed through supported opinion, conjecture, and hypothesis. Can process writing that deals with abstract concepts, contains cultural references, and uses specialized vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. Can understand formal and informal language on general social and professional topics, and can comprehend linguistically complex extended text.	Most informal and formal settings. <i>Practical, professional, and social topics treated both concretely and abstractly.</i>	Understands clearly organized and articulated text that can extend from several paragraphs to extended discourse.	Understands widely used idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and the cultural norms and expectations that commonly apply in routine and professional writing. Understands the mood, feeling, emotion, or stance expressed in written communication, including emotional overtones such as irony, sarcasm, or humor.

What are the Listening test items like?

ACTFL L&RCAT listening test items focus on the main idea, supporting detail, and at higher levels the inferences and connections the test taker can make in relation to the content and organization of the audio passages they hear.

Novice Level Example

Lottery Drawing

The following is a transcript of the sound sample that can be found on the ACTFL website www.actfl.org

First the daily number.... Draw the first digit please... Two... The second digit... Seven... And the third digit ... Nine.

Rationale for Rating

Listeners need only comprehend formulaic language that consists of two lists of numbers—one ordinal and one cardinal. Listeners need to process a message that is compartmentalized and has limited cohesion. The specific context of the message—a lottery drawing—allows listeners to anticipate speech that they can then recognize.

Intermediate Level Example

Weather Report

The following is a transcript of the sound sample that can be found on the ACTFL website www.actfl.org

103 the record high today... 101 out at the airport. Today is now the 85th day this summer we've seen 100-degree heat – number one on the all-time list by a mile. 69 days... the old record. We're not going to hit a hundred for the next several days, so can we end the summer with this being the final number? Nice round 85 days, let's hope so. Ah, out there, right now, skies are clear. It's 101 in the city. At 8:00 tonight, 94... At 10 P.M. tonight, forecasting 87 degrees...

Rationale for Rating

Listeners must be able to comprehend a speaker using loosely-connected language on the very familiar topic of weather. Listeners need to follow a speaker who communicates entirely in the present time and communicates a set of facts in a predictable way. Listeners are helped by the redundancies within the message and by their familiarity with the content of the message that allows them to hear what they expect to hear.

Advanced Level Example

Flight Attendant News

The following is a transcript of the sound sample that can be found on the ACTFL website www.actfl.org

The flight attendant is well on his way, I think, to becoming a folk hero. Talk about a dramatic exit. Flight attendant Steven Slater told the passenger to sit down when Jet Blue's Flight 1052 from Pittsburgh pulled up at the gate at JFK yesterday afternoon. The passenger refused, continued removing his luggage from the overhead bin, and that

luggage accidentally struck the flight attendant. Mr. Slater demanded an apology. The passenger declined, using a not-very-nice four-letter word, and that set Slater off. He turned on the public address system, and used the same four-letter word in front of all of the passengers, in particular directed to that man who had refused to sit. He then activated the inflatable slide, grabbed some brewskies, and slid his way out of a career as a flight attendant. Mr. Slater got home quickly. It wasn't long before the police showed up to arrest him.

Rationale for Rating

Listeners must be able to comprehend a speaker telling an uncomplicated story. The story, set in past time, deals with a newsworthy incident that requires no special knowledge on the part of the listeners to be understood. Listeners need to process authentic, connected speech that is several paragraphs long. This speech is lexically and structurally uncomplicated. The discourse is straightforward and is generally organized in a clear and predictable way.

Superior Level Example

AL GORE: Global Warming Testimony @ Congress 3.21.07

The following is a transcript of the sound sample that can be found on the ACTFL website www.actfl.org.

And our world faces a true planetary emergency. I know the phrase sounds shrill, and I know it's a challenge to the moral imagination, to see and feel and understand that the entire relationship between humanity and our planet has been radically altered. We quadrupled human population in less than one century from 1.6 billion in 1900 to 6.56 billion today. Population is stabilizing of its own accord as girls are educated and women are empowered and family planning that's culturally acceptable in country after country becomes widely available, and most importantly as child-survival rates increase and infant and maternal mortality... mortality decreases... when those things happen and especially when literacy among women increases around the world, the birth rates come down. The death rates come down, and then the birth rates come down, and it's stabilizing, but having multiplied by four the numbers of people on this planet, and we're going from over six-and-a-half now to over 9.1, almost certainly within the next 40, 45 years, that in itself causes a big change in the relationship between humanity and the planet.

Secondly, our technologies are thousands of times more powerful than any our grandparents had at their disposal. And so, even though we're more skillful and more effective in doing the things we've always done - exploiting the Earth for sustenance, providing for our families, and going about productive lives - the side effects of what we're doing sometimes now outstrip the development of extra wisdom to make sure that we handle these new powers in a way that doesn't do unintended harm. And somehow, we've also adopted kind of a short-term way of thinking that is also more different than what our grandparents more commonly used. Ah, we, in the markets, Congressman Bartlett said global warming is the biggest market failure in history. I kind of agree with that. If you look at the markets, the short-term focus is just dominant now. Quarterly reports, day traders, if you look at the entertainment business, and the media business,

and even the news business, its overnight polls, and how many eyeballs can you glue to the screen; you know the phrases...

Rationale for Rating

Listeners must be able to comprehend a speaker who is addressing a professional audience—here, members of Congress—on the abstract topic of humanity and the planet and who is using precise vocabulary (shrill) and phrasing (exploiting the Earth for sustenance) and even an idiom (how many eyeballs you can glue to the screen). Listeners must be able to understand a speaker using a standard dialect and talking on a subject with which the listeners may have varying degrees of familiarity and opinions. Listeners must be able to follow the speaker as he constructs an argument in extended discourse that includes cultural references.

Listeners who comprehend this passage are able to understand lengthy, formal discourse intended for an audience of educated native-speaker non-specialists.

What are the Reading test items like?

ACTFL L&RCAT reading test items focus on the main idea, supporting detail, and at higher levels the inferences and connections the test taker can make in relation to the content and organization of the texts they read.

Novice Level Example



FOR SALE BY OWNER:

2 year old used compact car.

Electric car: no gas, no noise

Clean Interior: inside looks new
Metallic Green exterior.
Low mileage (28,000 miles).

Great car for city life. Small size
makes parking easy.

**Call (503) 902 1099
for more information.**

Chevy Advertisement

Rationale for Rating

The readers of this advertisement must be able to process a highly predictable, loosely organized text with limited cohesion. They may rely heavily on extralinguistic support—here, the picture—to understand the message. This is an example of a text where the readers' recognition of images, brand names, and numbers leads in part to their comprehension. Novice-level readers are best able to comprehend a text when they are able to anticipate the information in it...

Intermediate Level Example



This is a very large, beautiful vase. There are no chips or cracks. The vase weighs over 9 lbs. This vase looks 100% better in person. Any questions, please ask.

Rationale for Rating

The readers of this text must deal with a straightforward text whose purpose is evident even before they read it. While written in complete sentences, there is very little cohesion among them, which facilitates the readers' task. The format of the text is predictable and aids the readers' comprehension.

Advanced Level Example

Hikers

When New Hampshire lawmakers decided to bill negligent hikers for their rescues, they figured they would solve some budget problems and teach hapless tourists a lesson. Then a 17-year-old Eagle Scout got lost on Mount Washington and ended up with a bill for \$25,000.

Now New Hampshire officials, facing possible litigation, are defending a law that hasn't solved their budget troubles and puts the state at odds with national search-and-rescue groups that say billing hikers is dangerous.

"It certainly has put us on the hot spot," says Lt. Todd Bogardus, head of search and rescue for the state Fish and Game Department.

Few other states bill those who are rescued — and most of the other laws target skiers who stray off marked slopes.

Oregon caps the amount that can be billed at \$500. Hawaii requires there be an "intentional disregard" for safety, and Idaho limits reimbursement to rescues from

lands that are closed to the public. A Maine law that permits the state to recover costs of a search and rescue is seldom enforced.

The National Association for Search and Rescue opposes billing for rescue, contending people won't seek help if they're afraid they'll have to pay for it. "The public needs to understand that there's going to be someone there to help them and you shouldn't worry about downstream consequences," spokesman Howard Paul says.

In April, Scott Mason, then a high school junior from Halifax, Mass., set out on a 17-mile day hike in the White Mountains. The popular hiking destination includes Mount Washington, where unpredictable conditions have earned it the title "home of the world's worst weather."

Rationale for Rating

Readers of this multi-paragraph text must deal with subject matter that is concrete and likely to be of general interest. Readers process a text that reports the facts of various hiking rescues and the consequences of reimbursement policies in a straightforward and predictable manner. The author uses general vocabulary although there are occasionally words and phrases for which the readers may need to use contextual clues to derive meaning (downstream consequences). While there is a journalistic style that is light-hearted in some cases (hapless tourists), there is no evidence of author's voice that the readers need to understand.

Readers at the Advanced Level are able to read to learn from this text.

Superior Level Example

Google Books

...[T]he big issues here are well worth public attention. Should a private corporation (Google) become the librarian for the world's collected knowledge? Even if it offers to play nice, share revenues, and make books easily accessible now, what about in the future?

Google has scanned about 10 million books so far, with a goal of 40 million or more. For the price of constructing just 60 miles of new highways, the Library of Congress could digitize 10 million books and put them online to be read free of charge in perpetuity by anyone, points out Brewster Kahle, the founder and director of the Internet Archive. That nonprofit group has digitized more than a million books itself but lacks the financial resources of Google.

And what about privacy? Google will be capturing information on which books users search for and search within, as well as those they might purchase. What will it do with that information? Information on what people choose to read is sensitive and subject to abuse. The company has promised strong privacy protections under the settlement but has been unwilling so far to spell them out in detail. And no matter how

good protections may sound at the outset, what assurance is there that Google's policy won't change in the future? These issues plague the Internet in general but have especially important implications here.

The idea of digitizing the world's written record and making it freely available to everyone is exhilarating. The ability of a student in Alabama or Albania to have access to the contents of the world's libraries online at their fingertips, for example, is a powerful concept and just one of the ways a free and open Web can lift humanity.

But history shows that when a company – even one with talent and good intentions – acts like a monopoly, it is subject to abuses. Despite the potentially monumental effects of this settlement, it has had little public scrutiny. Yet it needs a rigorous examination.

If it stands, the agreement must include long-term safeguards that allow public access to the full collection at reasonable cost, maintain the rights of copyright holders, and ensure the necessary privacy of those who use the service.

Rationale for Rating

Readers of this text must deal with subject matter that is most likely unfamiliar. Their comprehension comes in part from command of the language that is supported by a broad vocabulary, an understanding of more complex structures and knowledge of the target culture.

Readers must be able to process a reasoned, thoughtful argument about an abstract topic—copyright, both explicit and implicit—with cultural references (Google, Library of Congress). They must also understand the author's use of precise and specialized vocabulary (in perpetuity) and complex grammatical structures (And no matter how good protections may sound at the outset, what assurance is there that Google's policy won't change in the future?).

Readers at the Superior Level will read to learn from this text and learn from reading it.

What Are the Possible Test Outcomes (Proficiency Ratings)?

The ACTFL L&RCAT is machine-scored, with each item assessed as either correct or incorrect. The scoring procedure considers the difficulty of the passage, the level of difficulty of the three questions, and the test taker's responses to the questions. An algorithm then uses the data points to assign a final rating.

The Listening component of the ACTFL L&RCAT can be rated at one of the first four major levels of the ACTFL *Guidelines*:

- **Novice:** The individual can recognize key words, true aural cognates, and formulaic expressions that are highly contextualized and highly predictable, such as those found in introductions and greetings. They can understand words and phrases from simple questions, statements, and high-frequency commands that they have learned and rehearsed.
- **Intermediate:** The individual can understand simple, minimally connected speech that conveys basic information on highly familiar or everyday topics using high-frequency vocabulary. Individuals at this level are generally able to comprehend one utterance at a time while engaged in routine listening tasks such as understanding highly contextualized messages, straightforward announcements, and simple instructions and directions.
- **Advanced:** The individual can understand the main ideas and most supporting details in connected discourse on a variety of general interest topics. They can understand connected speech that is lexically and structurally uncomplicated and is organized in a clear and predictable way. They understand basic social norms and etiquette, can recognize formal and informal forms of speech, and sometimes understand references to major historical or cultural events.
- **Superior:** The individual can follow cohesive discourse with clear relationships of ideas given in a standard dialect. They can process reasoned oral argumentation expressed through supported opinion, conjecture, and hypothesis, as well as oral communication that deals with abstract concepts, contains cultural references, and uses specialized vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. They generally understand the mood, feeling, emotion, or stance expressed in oral communication, including emotional overtones such as the use of irony, sarcasm, or humor.

At the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels, the ACTFL L&RCAT Listening component rating can also reference one of three sublevels: Low, Mid, or High. The sublevels indicate how well the individual meets the criteria for the major level, and also how close the individual's proficiency is to sustaining the criteria for the next major level.

- **Low:** Baseline performance at the level. Individuals at this sublevel have consistent ability to meet the criteria for the level in all level-relevant communication situations. They may demonstrate some hesitation in doing so, but they are able to sustain communication with regard to all of the criteria. They demonstrate little ability to carry out communication functions that typify the next-higher major level.
- **Mid:** Solid performance at the level. Individuals at this sublevel demonstrate skill in carrying out the functions of the major level in all level-relevant communication situations. They may also exhibit partial ability to carry out communication tasks that typify the next-higher major level.
- **High:** Performance with quality and quantity at the level. Individuals at this sublevel communicate with ease and confidence when performing the functions of the level.

They are capable of functioning much of the time at the next higher major level, but they are unable to sustain language at that level without evidence of difficulty.

The Reading component of the ACTFL L&RCAT can be rated at one of the first four major levels of the ACTFL *Guidelines*:

- **Novice:** The individual can understand key words and cognates, as well as formulaic phrases that are highly contextualized. Novice-level readers are able to obtain a limited amount of information from highly predictable texts in which the topic or context is very familiar, such as a street sign, a store receipt, or a photo caption. Individuals at the Novice level may rely heavily on their own background knowledge and on extralinguistic support (such as photo imagery or the format of a store receipt) to derive meaning.
- **Intermediate:** Individuals can understand information conveyed in simple, predictable texts, relying on contextual clues and familiar text formats. They can understand texts that convey basic information such as that found in announcements, notices, and online collaborative tools and forums. These texts are not complex and have a predictable pattern of presentation. The discourse is minimally connected and primarily organized in individual sentences and strings of sentences containing mostly high-frequency vocabulary.
- **Advanced:** The individual can understand the main idea and supporting details of narrative and descriptive texts that have a clear and predictable structure and pertain to topics of general interest, such as news articles, blog posts, and travelogue descriptions. Comprehension is also supported by knowledge of the conventions of the language, such as noun/adjective agreement and verb placement. Readers at this level are able to compensate for limitations in their lexical and structural knowledge by using contextual clues. They have sufficient control of standard linguistic conventions to understand sequencing, time frames, and chronology.
- **Superior:** The individual can understand written texts from many genres dealing with a wide range of subjects, both familiar and unfamiliar. Comprehension comes from a command of the language that is supported by a broad vocabulary, an understanding of complex structures, and knowledge of the culture. Readers at the Superior level can draw inferences from textual and extralinguistic clues. Superior-level readers are able to understand lengthy texts of a professional, academic, or literary nature, including those that use abstract language and feature argumentation, supported opinion, and/or hypothesis.

At the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels, the ACTFL L&RCAT Reading rating can also reference one of three sublevels: Low, Mid, or High. The sublevels indicate how well the individual meets the criteria for the major level, and also how close the individual's proficiency is to sustaining the criteria for the next major level.

- **Low:** Baseline performance at the level. Individuals at this sublevel have consistent ability to meet the criteria for the level in all level-relevant communication situations. They may demonstrate some hesitation in doing so, but they are able to sustain communication with regard to all of the criteria. They demonstrate little ability to carry out communication functions that typify the next-higher major level.

- **Mid:** Solid performance at the level. Individuals at this sublevel demonstrate skill in carrying out the functions of the major level in all level-relevant communication situations. They may also exhibit partial ability to carry out communication tasks that typify the next-higher major level.
- **High:** Performance with quality and quantity at the level. Individuals at this sublevel communicate with ease and confidence when performing the functions of the level. They are capable of functioning much of the time at the next higher major level, but they are unable to sustain language at that level without evidence of difficulty.

Possible ACTFL L&RCAT ratings for each of the two components, Listening and Reading, are thus as follows:

- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------|
| • Novice Low | • Intermediate Low | • Advanced Low | • Superior |
| • Novice Mid | • Intermediate Mid | • Advanced Mid | |
| • Novice High | • Intermediate High | • Advanced High | |

For more information on the proficiency ratings, see the documents *Overview of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2024*, *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2024—Listening*, and *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2024—Reading*.

What Are Official ACTFL L&RCAT Ratings?

Official ACTFL L&RCAT ratings are assigned to those ACTFL L&RCATs that are conducted under the supervision of a proctor and delivered and scored by Language Testing International (LTI), the exclusive licensee of ACTFL assessments. Clients can request an ACTFL rating (according to the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2024 – Reading*), an ILR rating (according to the U.S. Government’s Interagency Language Roundtable *Skill Level Descriptions for Reading*), or a CEFR rating (according to the *Common European Framework of Reference*). Results are stored in LTI’s Test Management System and are made available, along with the ACTFL Certificate of Listening Proficiency, to authorized users through the LTI Client Site. Individual candidates testing directly through LTI (rather than through an organization) can access their results and certificate by logging into their account on [languagetesting.com](https://www.languagetesting.com).

What Accommodations Are Available?

Several types of testing accommodations are available for candidates with a documented need. These may include extended testing time, extended breaks, screen magnification, human reader, oral interpreter for directions, testing environment adjustments, and blank scratch paper, depending on the test type and the individual candidate’s needs. Accommodations can be requested from LTI. LTI’s accommodation team works with candidates and the organizations they’re testing through to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations. For more

information on accommodation support and how to request an accommodation, please visit <https://www.languagetesting.com/academic-test-accommodations>.

How Is the ACTFL L&RCAT Currently Being Used?

Official ACTFL L&RCAT ratings can be used for a variety of purposes in academic, commercial, and government communities.

- In academia, ACTFL L&RCAT ratings can be used for international student admissions or placement, general assessments, or exit/graduation requirements.
- In global business and government communities, ACTFL L&RCAT ratings can be used for certification, hiring, and promotion in multilingual positions.

How Is the ACTFL L&RCAT Proctored?

The ACTFL L&RCAT must be administered in a secure, proctored environment. Proctoring options are communicated at the time of order from LTI's website (for individual candidates not testing through an organization) or as part of the account setup for organizations looking to test their learners or candidates.

How Can I Schedule an ACTFL L&RCAT?

To schedule individual or group ACTFL Listening and Reading Computer Adaptive Tests, contact LTI.

www.languagetesting.com
testing@languagetesting.com
1-800-486-8444

ABOUT ACTFL ASSESSMENTS

ACTFL is proud to offer a variety of assessments to support language educators and learners in higher education and beyond. From placement to graduation and certification, ACTFL has an assessment for each step of the postsecondary journey with options available for institutions and individuals. ACTFL assessments measure language ability based on skill level for the most accurate results possible.

ACTFL proficiency tests are used worldwide by academic institutions, government agencies, and private corporations for purposes such as academic placement, student assessment, program evaluation, professional certification, hiring, and promotional qualification.

- Placement: A non-proctored proficiency-based framework in a computer adaptive solution designed to assist in the placement of incoming post-secondary learners
- Documentation: Measure and evaluate program effectiveness or student progress and benchmarks to achieving badges, credits, or certification
- Teacher Certification: ACTFL language proficiency assessments are accepted by most states for some component of their teacher certification process. You should review your state or program's certification requirements so that you can be sure which assessment(s) are required.

For more information on ACTFL assessments, visit

<https://www.actfl.org/assessments>

For information on Proficiency and Assessment workshops, visit

<https://www.actfl.org/professional-learning/individual-workshops>

For information on ACTFL tester and rater training, visit

<https://www.actfl.org/assessments/tester-rater-certifications>

