

Assessing Young Dual Language Learners:

Diversity of Young Dual Language Learners

LANGUAGE STORIES

Five Questions

- **Who** is in the child's life? Who primarily cares for the child at home? Who lives with the child in the home? (These may include parents, grandparents, siblings, or others.)
- **What** language(s) or dialect(s) does the child experience? What languages or dialects does the child use? With whom does he or she use each language?
- **When** was the child first exposed to each language? Since birth? Later on?
- **Where** was the child born? Where did the child's family originally come from?
- **How** does the family envision the child's use of language in the future? How does the family support language development?

LEARNING ABOUT EMILIA'S LANGUAGE STORY

As you listen to Farzana's conversation with Emilia's mother, Ana, answer the questions below.

Farzana: I'd like to learn more about the languages Emilia experiences at home and in the community. Could you tell me a bit about your family, the languages you speak, and how you came to speak them?

Ana: Most of our family lives in Chiapas in southern Mexico, but some have joined us here. My sister, Emilia's aunt, lives down the road from us, so Emilia has two cousins close to her age nearby. Emilia also has two older brothers.

Farzana: How nice to have family close by! What language do those cousins usually speak? Can you tell me a little about what languages Emilia experiences most often?

Ana: My sister and her kids mostly speak in Spanish, so when we are all together, Emilia hears and speaks a lot of Spanish. Emilia's dad and I really want her to be able to speak to her grandparents, so we try to speak Spanish at home. Emilia's brothers like to speak English, though, so the three of them will usually speak English together.

Farzana: It sounds like Emilia has been around both Spanish and English for some time now.

Ana: Yes. She was born here, and her brothers have been talking with her in English since she was a tiny baby, but her dad and I always speak to her in Spanish.

Learning About Emilia's Language Story

Who is in the child's life?	
What language(s) or dialect(s) does the child experience?	
When was the child first exposed to each language? Since birth? Later on?	
Where was the child born? Where did the child's family originally come from?	
How does the family envision the child's use of language in the future?	

HANDOUT

EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

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LEARNING ABOUT MARIA'S LANGUAGE STORY

Take a moment to read what Farzana learned from Maria's family.

Farzana learns Maria's family has recently emigrated from Mexico, and Farzana's class is Maria's first exposure to English. The family moved in order to live with Maria's grandparents, who primarily speak Huasteca Nahuatl (pronounced wah-stay-kah nah-wah-tel), a language specific to central Mexico. Maria will be spending her afternoons with her grandparents.

Use the five questions below to summarize what Farzana learned about Maria's language story.

Learning About Maria's Language Story

Who is in the child's life?	
What language(s) or dialect(s) does the child experience?	
When was the child first exposed to each language? Since birth? Later on?	
Where was the child born? Where did the child's family originally come from?	
How does the family envision the child's use of language in the future?	

Write down one additional question you might ask Maria's family in order to learn more.

Share your question with a partner.