

Assessments of language proficiency

The assessments given in the in-home interviews (years 1-3) were the BEST Plus (listening comprehension) and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT). In addition, in the classroom, students were given the BEST Literacy test and the CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System).

Given her teachers' assessments of her progress in the classroom, the progress seen on the standardized assessments (below) is unexpected. Quyen made little progress in listening comprehension from 2002 to 2003 according to her CASAS tests. However, observations of her speaking in the classroom show she made great progress in this area and suggests to us that she met her personal goal when she started ESL classes at the Lab School – that goal being to strengthen her speaking and listening skills. We also see a large gain in her literacy skills from 2003 to 2004 according to her BEST Literacy test scores.

		2002	2003	2004	2006
			7/28/2003	7/23/2004	3/1/2006
BEST Plus (listening/speaking)			403 (low beginning)	423 (high beginning)	NA
PPVT	Raw score		57	61	65
vocabulary	Age equivalence		4.5	4.75	5
BEST Literacy			7/3/2003	2/24/2004	
			SPL V (high intermediate)	SPL VII (advanced)	
CASAS (listening)			3/02/2004	5/25/2004	
			202 (low intermediate)	204 (low intermediate)	

*SPL= Student performance level

V= “Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, logical order). Can use word analysis skills and context clues to determine meaning with texts on familiar subjects. Individual can write simple paragraphs with main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures. Can self- and peer-edit for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.”

VII= “Individual can read moderately complex text related to life roles and descriptions and narratives from authentic materials on familiar subjects. Uses context and word analysis skills to understand vocabulary, and uses multiple strategies to understand unfamiliar texts. Can make inferences, predictions, and compare and contrast information in familiar texts. Individual can write multi-paragraph text (e.g., organizes and develops ideas with clear introduction, body, and conclusion), using some complex grammar and a variety of sentence structures. Makes some grammar and spelling errors. Uses a range of vocabulary.”

As the table below shows, the large jump in Quyen’s literacy assessment scores coincide with when she reported spending quite a bit of time reading in English—in 2003 and 2004.

	2003	
Reading in English	For obligation	For pleasure
Minutes per week	0	540

2004	
For obligation	For pleasure
510	15

2006	
For obligation	For pleasure
120	210