

# Understanding the PROFICIENCY SCALE

Proficiency Scale	→			
	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending
	The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

## THE LEARNING JOURNEY TAKES TIME AND PATIENCE

For each individual student, learning moves through various stages. The goal is the same; there is a particular skill or understanding that needs to be learned and demonstrated. However, the time it takes for students to reach their destination and the route they take to get there varies. The proficiency scale is a way for teachers, students and parents to understand where each student is on their learning journey and what they need to work on to move towards proficiency. The following examples are adapted from our work with Canadian Assessment Educator, Katie White, who describes these stages of learning in the context of learning to drive.



**EMERGING** When learners are emerging, they are in the process of building their readiness to learn. This includes elements such as becoming familiar with language, background context or foundational skills.

When we are learning to drive, before we get behind the wheel, we need to learn what the street signs mean, the basic rules of the road and what all the parts of the car do. We need a solid foundation before we move onto practicing the skill we're learning and move to being supported.

**DEVELOPING** When learners are developing, they are working with others to improve their skill and understanding. This is where students spend most of their time, practicing, refining, making wrong turns and correcting their processes and thinking.

This is when we actually turn on the car and try driving. We need opportunities with someone to guide us where we might need support and further practice with the process. It is this practice with a more experienced driver that allows us to move towards proficiency.

**PROFICIENT** When learners are proficient, they are able to demonstrate the skills they have learned independently and with confidence. Students should be able to show their proficiency in a number of ways.

Drivers demonstrate their proficiency by passing their driving test. Once they show that they have the skill to drive independently, they no longer need someone in the car with them; they can continue to develop their comfort and enjoyment independently.

**EXTENDING** When learners are extending, they are free to explore the larger applications and possibilities of their learning. As they develop deeper understanding, they have more opportunities to make thoughtful connections and to innovate.

Once drivers are extending, they can try their hand at many new experiences. They can drive different sorts of vehicles and explore different terrain and weather. Their proficiency in the skill of driving allows them to explore the world in ways they previously weren't able to.