

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Learner Access to Assessment

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Levels	<i>Any</i>
Aims	<i>Become aware of own development</i> <i>Perform an integrated teacher–learner assessment</i> <i>Produce a record of progress</i> <i>Be assessed during classroom tasks</i>
Class Time	<i>40 minutes</i>
Preparation Time	<i>20 minutes</i>
Resources	<i>Listening, reading, speaking, or writing task</i>



Assessment should not be separate from teaching but rather a natural step within the teaching and learning process. In fact, assessment can give teachers one more opportunity to recycle input on content and have learners put that content into practice. The difference between this kind of assessment and any other practice task is that the learners have already worked with the content and will be asked to assess their performance after carrying out the task; teachers will do the same. The advantages of this type of assessment are that it is ongoing, is built into classroom tasks, provides a record of progress for learners and teachers, and allows learners to be aware of their development.

PROCEDURE

Listening or Reading Assessment

1. Follow the usual steps for prelistening and prereading exercises.
 - Use visual aids to help the learners forecast what the content of the task will be.
 - Guide the learners to create a hypothesis about the content by using headings, subheadings, and illustrations.
 - Elicit from the students what they predict they will have to find out about the material.

- List the questions the students will have to answer on the blackboard. At this stage, ask questions that concern a general understanding of the content.
 - Make sure the learners understand the prelistening or prereading questions.
2. Expose the learners to the material.
 3. Give the learners time to answer the questions individually.
 4. Check the answers with the whole group; motivate peer correction and justification of responses.
 5. Elicit from the students some detailed information presented in the task. Have the students do a second listening or reading to look for these details.
 6. Repeat Steps 3 and 4.

SPEAKING OR WRITING ASSESSMENT

1. Follow the usual steps for prespeaking and prewriting exercises.
2. Use audiovisual aids to help the learners get ideas for carrying out the task.
3. Guide the learners to elicit topics for discussion or writing. List these topics on the blackboard.
4. Elicit from the learners the kinds of structures and vocabulary they will need to carry out the task.
5. Review any language items necessary.
6. Give clear instructions on what the students are to do and how they are to do it.

In a speaking assessment

- give the learners time to think about what they are going to say
- place them either in pairs or small groups
- be available to help the learners with any vocabulary or structures they need during the task
- have the learners discuss their performance with their peers

In a writing assessment

- have the learners do the writing assignment
- have the learners exchange papers and check the use of structures and

vocabulary as well as the understanding of content (instruct them to give only constructive or positive feedback)

- help them if necessary

FEEDBACK AND SCORING

Pass out the assessment sheet (see Appendix). Explain how to fill it out. For example, if the assessment is based on a listening task involving two people talking about the advantages and disadvantages of living in New York and Los Angeles, the students might fill in the Content space in the assessment sheet with *Comparing cities* and the Skill space with *Listening*.

Discuss with the students how they should assess themselves, how much of the activity they think they should have understood, and what they believe should be considered an *excellent*, *very good*, *good*, and *fair* performance. For example, for the listening task in Step 1, the following rubric might work: *Consider your performance excellent if you were able to list all the advantages and disadvantages mentioned. Consider your performance very good if you were able to list more than half of the advantages and disadvantages. Consider your performance good if you were able to list half of them.*

Give the students several minutes to grade themselves and write about their development.

Collect the assessment sheets. After class, go over the learners' self-assessments. Write down your opinion of their performance and ways they can improve (e.g., what they need to review or practice more).

Return the assessment sheets to the learners in the next class. Be available to the students during and after class to discuss their assessments.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS

1. Integrate the use of two or more skills in the same task and assessment (e.g., listening *and* speaking, reading *and* speaking, listening *and* writing).
2. A suggested schedule for doing this assessment is after every 10 hours of class.
3. Some students may resist assessing themselves, believing that assessment is only valid if it comes from the teacher. Explain that you will assess their performance but that it is essential for them to know how they themselves feel about their progress.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Lewis, J. (1990). Self-assessment in the classroom: A case study. In G. Brindley (Ed.), *The second language curriculum in action* (pp. 187–213). Sydney, Australia: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.

APPENDIX: *Assessment Sheet*

NOTE: Fit multiple copies of the assessment on one piece of paper to hand out to the students.

Student's name _____ Group _____

Teacher's name _____ Date _____

Skill _____

Content _____

Student's assessment _____

Teacher's comments _____
