

TKT: Module 2 – Appropriate assessment

Overview: These practice materials by Russell Whitehead are designed to help with the Module 2 exam, in particular with the 'Planning and preparing a lesson or sequence of lessons' section of the test. In these materials we will think about the aims of assessment and choosing suitable assessment activities. Please note that these materials are not focused directly on the purposes and methods of assessment; that is part of Module 1.

Part of exam: Module 2 (Lesson planning and use of resources for language teaching): Planning and preparing a lesson or sequence of lessons

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student

Time: 30–60 mins

- Subsequent discussion should enable you to establish that the first, informal test actually gave you quite a lot of useful and interesting information, while the second, formal test was less useful. It's all to do with appropriate aims and selection of tasks.

Be prepared: if the trainees are due to take the TKT, they may have a healthy questioning, not to say challenging, approach to the test itself – so you may need to prepare yourself for some informed discussion (with relevance to the Handbook, etc), or maybe choose to move firmly onwards.

Teacher's notes

Notes for teacher trainers

It is likely that you will wish to deal with this area alongside TKT's other assessment focus, in Module 1: Background to language teaching (Aspects of assessment). The ideas you use there will also have relevance here.

If it's appropriate, try this:

- Divide the trainees into discussion groups. Go round, unobtrusively monitoring, and note to yourself who talks most, listens most and so on – you can choose your own criteria (but make them worthwhile).
- Then give the trainees a short written test. This should look like some kind of progress test on the course. However, make the questions (subtly) somewhat pointless. For example, *How many handouts have there been?*, *What day did we study passives?*, etc. Take the completed tests in, and make a show of analysing them.

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Stage 1: Considering

- a) *Trainees' own answers*
- b) *They are all relevant to language learners, though some (intercultural understanding, sensitive communication and IT skills) may be more dependent on how the learners will be learning or how they will be using English.*
- c) *All are true in some situations.*

Stage 2: Experimenting

- d) *Trainees' own answers*
- e)
 1. *present simple or continuous*
 2. *comparative forms*
 3. *awareness of minimal pairs*
 4. *listening for gist*
 5. *making requests*
 6. *communicative ability*
 7. *conjunctions*
- f)
 1. *C – This straightforward (and challenging) task will show how fluently the learner can speak. It does not, however, really show – being only a monologue – how polite the learner can be.*
 2. *D – This simple assessment task will show whether learners can identify the syllables pronounced as schwa in words. It does not guarantee, however, that they can speak with correct pronunciation.*
 3. *A – This multiple-choice task will show that the learner can identify appropriate polite forms. It does not, however, demonstrate an ability to speak fluently or with correct pronunciation.*

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Stage 1: Considering

Worksheet

a) **What areas of language and learning can be assessed? Make notes of the three most important things to assess, in your opinion:**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

b) **Think about the following skills. Are they relevant to language learners?**

- speaking skills
- grammatical knowledge
- writing skills
- range of vocabulary
- listening skills
- reading skills
- reference skills (how to access and use reference materials)
- intercultural understanding
- sensitive communication
- IT skills

If not, why not? What other skills would you add to this list?

c) **Do you think these statements are *True* or *False*?**

1. Regular informal assessment will make learners feel more comfortable about formal assessment.
2. Practical issues mean that we often use things like multiple-choice questions rather more than open questions.
3. Spoken ability can be effectively tested in pairwork.
4. Assessing written compositions will be more reliable if specific criteria are used in the assessment process.
5. Stress can reduce learners' performance in test situations.

Now check your answers.

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Stage 2: Experimenting

Worksheet

d) Think about what exercises and activities you could use to assess the following. Make notes next to each one.

- comparative forms _____
- conjunctions _____
- present simple or continuous _____
- communicative ability _____
- awareness of minimal pairs _____
- listening for gist _____
- making requests _____

e) Match the areas of testing focus in d) to these possible example test items:

1. Choose the correct option:

Every morning, I am *getting up* / *get up* at about 7 o'clock.

2. Correct the errors in these sentences:

Who is the more tall, Harry or Sally?

This book's interestinger than the first one.

3. Listen to the recording and circle the word you hear for each question.

a) cow/car **b)** bee/pea **c)** pitch/peach

4. Play the recording and answer the questions.

a) Is Lily happy about the situation? **b)** Is everybody going to the party?

5. Put the words into the correct order.

post this could letter please you me for ?

6. Work with a partner and discuss the topic on the card.

7. Combine these sentences into one sentence, using the word in bold.

because

It is raining hard. I am going to take my umbrella with me.

Now check your answers.

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- f) Now try this part of a sample TKT exam task. For questions 1–3, match the task instructions with the focus of assessment listed A–D. There is one extra option which you do not need to use.

Assessment focuses:

- A awareness of politeness in spoken language
- B accuracy of pronunciation when speaking
- C fluency in speaking
- D awareness of *schwa*

Task instructions:

- 1 Give a 30-second talk about one of the topics on the list.
- 2 Use a red or highlighter pen to mark the parts of words that are spoken without stress and without a specific sound.
- 3 Circle the most suitable answer for the reception clerk to give each hotel guest.

Now check your answers.



Think about:

The process of assessment translates or converts tasks from, for example, pair discussion tasks into assessment tasks.

Stage 3: Reflecting

What have you learnt from these materials? Look through the materials again. Make notes of the most important points – the points you think every teacher should remember about assessment.



Don't forget:

Assessment is basically about giving learners the opportunity to show the best they can do.

Set yourself a target

Like most teachers, you're probably informally assessing learners all the time. During the next few weeks, make this a more conscious activity. For example, next time you set the learners up in a group discussion activity, think about what will tell you if they are doing 'well' or 'badly'. What verb forms, or vocabulary, or functions do you want to hear (and not hear)? As the learners do this activity, try consciously to assess their performance.



Think about:

You need to know what to do with the results of assessment.

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Think about:

Results of assessment can have a strong effect (negatively or positively) on the motivation of learners and on the atmosphere or dynamics of classes.

Worksheet

Suggestions for independent learning

Talk to colleagues and friends who teach other subjects about how they assess their learners. See what ideas and experiences are common and what is different.