ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING: SAMPLES

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Effective assessment provides detailed, useful information for instructors, learners and other stakeholders.


The purpose of these assessment *as* learning samples is to help instructors see how the purposes of assessment can be applied in their classrooms.

These samples can be used:

- by individual instructors
- in a course guide or curriculum package designed to support instructors as they implement the curriculum

This tool includes three parts:

- an summary of assessment purposes
- a sample sign in/sign out chart
- a description of learning photographs
Summary of Assessment Purposes

This chart summarizes the three purposes of assessment. Each purpose is described in more detail throughout this stage, with samples provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Also known as…</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Assessment *for* learning | Formative Assessment | Assessment *for* learning helps instructors form a clear picture of the abilities and needs of their learners. Assessment is done for the purpose of measuring what the learners can and cannot do at any given point in the learning process, and informs instructional decisions. It:  
• is ongoing  
• is tied to learning outcomes  
• provides information that informs decisions about planning and instruction  
• allows instructors to provide immediate, descriptive feedback that guides learning  
Examples: focused questioning in class, anecdotal notes |
| Assessment *as* learning | Self-assessment | Assessment *as* learning involves the learners in the process of looking at their learning and reflecting on their own abilities. With instructor guidance and through focused activities, learners are encouraged to think about and assess their learning. It:  
• is ongoing  
• is tied to learning outcomes  
• assists learners in becoming aware of their learning process  
• involves self-monitoring and self-evaluation  
• requires teacher direction and support  
Examples: in-class discussion of learning points, self assessment checklists, learning logs |
| Assessment *of* learning | Summative Assessment | Assessment *of* learning measures the learners’ abilities to meet outcomes after learning and practice have occurred. It can be formal or informal. Assessment *of* learning:  
• is tied to learning outcomes  
• occurs at the end of a learning theme or cycle  
• is used to evaluate whether learners have achieved the learning outcomes, and to what degree  
• is used to make decisions about learners’ next placement  
Examples: anecdotal notes, quizzes, writing samples marked using rubrics, documented observations |

Adapted from Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education (2006)
Sample Sign-in/Sign-out Chart

A sign in/sign out chart for class is an effective assessment tool for any phase. It focuses on the specific learning outcome, “manage time” in Habits of Mind and it can also be used to assess learners’ abilities to organize information in lists, tables and charts. Learners in Foundation Phase or Phase I will require extensive modeling and support.

Organizational Strategies

Create an attendance chart with each learner’s name and the class dates on it.

- Post the chart inside the classroom near the door so that learners can make a check in the appropriate box for the dates when they are in class. They should write an \textit{L} when they are late and an \textit{A} for the days that they are absent (to be written upon their return to class).

Conditions for effective implementation

- Discuss attendance policies and the benefits of attending regularly and arriving on time.
- Go over the chart format with the learners before beginning to use it and assist them with filling it in until they feel comfortable using it independently.
- Ensure that learners understand the symbols they will be putting on the chart before beginning to use it.
- Encourage the learners to take responsibility for their attendance and to be honest.
- Try this out for a short period at first. If it becomes habit and is not too labour intensive, continue it for the rest of the term.

Suggestions for using the information effectively

- Review the chart on a regular basis in class, giving learners the opportunity to reflect on their own attendance. Provide opportunities to discuss classroom attendance expectations and the challenges and benefits of regular attendance.
- Bring the chart to learning conferences to illustrate the connection between attendance habits and progress.
This is an example of a sign-in chart used in a Phase I ESL literacy class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Monday May 3</th>
<th>Wednesday May 5</th>
<th>Monday May 10</th>
<th>Wednesday May 12</th>
<th>Monday May 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farida</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Photographs

Learning photographs are effective tools for assessment as learning. They provide learners with an initial exposure to naming strengths and areas of improvement. It is appropriate for use when the semester is well underway and learners have had ample opportunities for practice in the range of skills to be focused on in the term.

Procedure

- Place large signs with pictures and words representing skill areas around the room. Ensure that learners can name each skill area (e.g. spelling, reading, writing, listening).
- Ask learners to think about their skills at the beginning of term. Ask them to think about their skills on day one and think about their improvement. Invite learners to move to the area of the room that corresponds to one skill they feel has improved. Use simplified oral prompts to achieve this with low oral levels.
- Take a picture of learners standing by their improved skill area. Use the pictures in a classroom portfolio display or print out copies for individual learner portfolios. This provides the instructor with a record of the self-assessment without the learner doing an abstract worksheet on the topic.

Conditions for effective implementation

- Learners need to know the names of the different skills they've been working on in class (e.g. spelling, reading, writing, computer, listening, speaking)
- Learners need to have experience with activities in which they move to places around the room according to certain criteria (e.g. according favourite colour, likes/dislikes)

Suggestions for using the assessment information effectively

- Include the photographs in a classroom portfolio or bulletin board. Call learners’ attention to it during learning conferences.
- Use this activity again before the end of the semester to reflect on progress.

Variation (increased level of complexity)

- Use sentences with the pictures as headings (e.g. I improved in reading.)
- Extend the task by asking learners to move to an area that they want to improve. Take another picture and use this to document goal-setting. Provide targeted instruction and feedback that will help learners improve in their identified area. Include this in learners’ portfolios.
- Provide headings on the board. Using headings with no pictures increases the complexity. Have learners write their name under the heading to indicate the area in which they’ve improved. Take a picture and print it for class or learner portfolios.
For a complete list of the works cited in this document and in *Learning for LIFE: An ESL Literacy Curriculum Framework*, please refer to: [www.esl-literacy.com/workscited2](http://www.esl-literacy.com/workscited2)