ASSESSMENT FOR 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 for 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 set of anecdotal notes
- a sample checklist
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>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment for learning</td>
<td>Formative Assessment</td>
<td>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:</td>
<td>• is ongoing&lt;br&gt;• is tied to learning outcomes&lt;br&gt;• provides information that informs decisions about planning and instruction&lt;br&gt;• allows instructors to provide immediate, descriptive feedback that guides learning&lt;br&gt;Examples: focused questioning in class, anecdotal notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment as learning</td>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>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:</td>
<td>• is ongoing&lt;br&gt;• is tied to learning outcomes&lt;br&gt;• assists learners in becoming aware of their learning process&lt;br&gt;• involves self-monitoring and self-evaluation&lt;br&gt;• requires teacher direction and support&lt;br&gt;Examples: in-class discussion of learning points, self assessment checklists, learning logs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of learning</td>
<td>Summative Assessment</td>
<td>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:</td>
<td>• is tied to learning outcomes&lt;br&gt;• occurs at the end of a learning theme or cycle&lt;br&gt;• is used to evaluate whether learners have achieved the learning outcomes, and to what degree&lt;br&gt;• is used to make decisions about learners’ next placement&lt;br&gt;Examples: anecdotal notes, quizzes, writing samples marked using rubrics, documented observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education (2006)
Sample Anecdotal Notes

Anecdotal notes can be used effectively in assessment for learning. You can use them to assess learners’ day-to-day skills and progress and to inform teaching. As learners complete a task in the classroom, circulate around the room and take notes on learners’ performance. Individual learners’ successes and challenges with the task are noted on a documentation sheet. This assessment technique is appropriate for all phases and for all aspects of learning: strategies, habits of mind, listening and speaking and reading and writing. Adapt the criteria to meet the outcomes for their level.

Organizational strategies

Anecdotal notes can be organized by:

- **task**: taking notes on several learners for one task on one day
- **learner**: taking notes on one learner, for several tasks over a period of time

Conditions for effective implementation

- Organize a chart with specific outcomes that you will be looking for throughout the term.
- Do not try to assess everyone in everything, every day. Select specific outcomes related to current class focus to assess on certain days.
- Jot down notes in point form on the chart, keeping them simple so that the assessment does not become cumbersome and labour-intensive.

Suggestions for using the assessment information effectively

- Determine areas to focus on for **whole class** review and practice.
- Determine skills that **individual learners** need extra support and practice in.
- When appropriate, provide immediate and descriptive feedback to learners so they know what they need to do to improve.
- Use the anecdotal notes in learning conferences to discuss skills improved and areas to work on.

Variation

- These documentation sheets can be used at any level, by adapting the outcomes and criteria to suit the level.
- Observations could be noted on sticky notes during class which can be stuck to each learner’s chart after class.
This is an example of a task-based anecdotal assessment for a Phase I ESL literacy class.

**TASK BASED ANECDOTAL ASSESSMENT RECORD**

**Level:** Phase I  
**Course dates:** Sept.-Dec.

**General Learning Outcome:** Interpret informational text  
**Specific Learning Outcome:** Engage in personal reading  
**Task:** Read a language experience story

**Conditions:**
- Class made story, context is highly familiar and personally relevant  
- Familiar vocabulary  
- No wrap around text/font is large and clear  
- Task is familiar; class-made language experience stories have been done previously  
- Reading has been practiced chorally with teacher support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Decoding/ sounding out words</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>Can read most words</td>
<td>Answers questions accurately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nefeesa</td>
<td>Guesses using first consonant</td>
<td>No trouble with yes/no – got mixed up with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Trouble with many words – gets first sound of some, then stops</td>
<td>Difficulty with yes/no and oral questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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This is an example of a task-based anecdotal assessment for a Phase I ESL literacy class.
Sample Checklist

Checklists can be used for documenting skills over time. You can simply check off which learners demonstrated certain skills, strategies or habits of mind on various days throughout the term.

For example, a checklist for the whole class could include the following:

- contributes orally to vocabulary game
- remembers pencil
- contributes orally to “what’s your favourite...?”
- puts worksheet in binder independently
- and positions paper correctly on desk

The demonstration of these practices over time gives the instructor specific information about which learners need more time and support in these areas.

Organizational Strategies

- Create a chart that lists each learner’s name and specific skills to be focused on in class.
- Observe learners doing various tasks throughout the term, and record demonstration of skills on the chart with a checkmark, date or note.

Conditions for effective implementation

- Make it a habit to record success when observing learners.
- Encourage learners by drawing their attention to their successes when you observe them.
- Do not try to observe each learner in each skill every day, but note things when they come up.

Suggestions for using the information effectively

- Refer to the chart when planning lessons to determine areas where review is needed.
- Refer to the chart during learning conferences to discuss areas of success or challenge with individual learners.
This is an example of a checklist used in a Foundation Phase ESL literacy class.

Sample Foundations Checklist

Date: Oct. 18-22
Purpose of Assessment: Assessment for learning
General Learning Outcome: Interpret formatted text
Specific Learning Outcome: Interpret lists, charts and tables
Task: Naming and ordering letters

Conditions:
- task is familiar
- task is modeled/prompted by instructor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participates in choral rote reciting of alphabet</th>
<th>Contribtes orally to naming various letters</th>
<th>Spells name aloud</th>
<th>Using a model and working in pairs, puts alphabet flashcards in order</th>
<th>Uses finger for tracking on a model while class recites alphabet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyabile</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farida</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)