

## Foreword

The tests of English language proficiency presented in this book were developed by Integrate Ireland Language and Training (David Little, Barbara Lazenby Simpson, Bronagh Finnegan Čatibusič) with the help of language support teachers working in primary schools around the country. The tests are based on IILT's English Language Proficiency Benchmarks (revised version, September 2003), the three levels of which correspond to the three proficiency levels (1, 2 and 3) formerly required by the Department of Education and Science in applications for language support. The benchmarks specify what pupils should be able to do in English at each level and thus reflect the task-based approach to teaching and learning promoted by IILT. In designing the tests every effort has been made to select tasks that pupils encounter regularly in their language support classes and to design scoring procedures that will achieve accurate results provided the tests are administered strictly according to the instructions provided.

Draft tests were presented at in-service seminars for primary language support teachers as follows: *speaking* and *writing* in autumn 2004, *reading* in spring 2005, *listening* in autumn 2005. Each set of tests was piloted by some 50 language support teachers working in different parts of the country. Feedback indicated that most teachers found the tests easy to administer within the language support context, that the tests elicited an accurate representation of pupils' English language proficiency, and that taking the tests was a positive experience for both teachers and pupils. At the end of the piloting process the tests were revised on the basis of pupil performance and detailed feedback from teachers. A report on the piloting process is available on the IILT web site ([www.iilt.ie](http://www.iilt.ie)).

We acknowledge with gratitude the role played by language support teachers in the development of the tests. The feedback they gave us at in-service seminars and especially via the piloting process played a crucial role in determining the final form of the tests.

We are also grateful to the Educational Company of Ireland Limited and artists whose work they have used for permission to reproduce copyright material in some of the tests.

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August 2006