



APPENDICES & BIBLIOGRAPHY



Appendix A

Further information on classroom assessment methods

This appendix presents supplementary information on self-assessment, questioning, and teacher-designed tasks and tests as outlined in Section 2. This includes information on

Self-assessment

- Rubrics
- Thumbs up/thumbs down
- Traffic lights
- Plus, Minus and Interesting (PMI) diagrams
- Talk partners/buddies
- Ladders

Questioning

- Types of questions

Teacher-designed tasks and tests

- Planning for a classroom based task
- Types of test questions.

Appendix B provides some photocopiable resources for use with self-assessment, portfolio assessment, and teacher-designed tasks and tests. The NCCA's ongoing work in supporting assessment in the *Primary School Curriculum* will be published online on the ACTION (Assessment, Curriculum, and Teaching Innovation On the Net) website accessed at <http://www.ncca.ie>.

Self-assessment

Rubrics

Section 2 provides examples of a rubric being used for self-assessment (p. 15) and for conferencing (p. 25). In brief, a rubric is an assessment tool which describes varying levels of quality in a specific piece of work. It can be used to assess simple learning activities as well as more complex tasks. It can also be adapted for use across class levels.

A rubric can be designed by the teacher himself/herself or collaboratively by the teacher and the children. When a rubric is introduced initially to a class it should be in a simple form, and be used with a particular area of learning until the children become familiar with it and how it is used. Simple rubrics using faces or other symbols to indicate 'levels of satisfaction' can be used with infant classes. Children can be helped to assess their own work in very simple ways by verbally commenting on what they have done, saying whether they are pleased with it, what they like or don't like about it, or what they would like to do better next time. Rubrics can also be used by the teacher to inform the children of the criteria by which their work will be judged.

A rubric has two essential features: (1) a list of criteria, i.e. the important elements of the work, and (2) levels of quality, i.e. what the elements of the work look like at each of the levels of quality. Below is an example of a rubric developed by Airasian (2000) for scoring pieces of children's writing.

A scoring rubric - writing to express personal ideas

Points	What the points mean
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development</i>: consistently develops ideas into a complete, well-developed whole • <i>Organisation</i>: sequences in a logical and effective manner • <i>Focus on audience</i>: anticipates and answers the audience's needs and questions • <i>Language</i>: consistently uses language that enhances writing.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development</i>: partially develops ideas but does not provide a complete, well-developed whole • <i>Organisation</i>: purposely orders ideas for the reader to follow • <i>Focus on audience</i>: usually anticipates and answers the audience's needs and questions • <i>Language</i>: frequently uses language to enhance the writing.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development</i>: rarely develops ideas, produces poorly-developed and incomplete ideas • <i>Organisation</i>: usually orders ideas but some interruptions in the flow • <i>Focus on audience</i>: occasionally anticipates and answers the audience's needs and questions • <i>Language</i>: sometimes uses language to enhance the writing.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development</i>: no development of ideas into a complete whole • <i>Organisation</i>: rarely evidences logical ordering of ideas • <i>Focus on audience</i>: does not attempt to anticipate and answer the audience's needs and questions • <i>Language</i>: fails to use language to enhance the writing.

Thumbs up/thumbs down

Thumbs up/thumbs down involves children indicating their level of understanding or their feelings by showing their thumbs pointing up or down.

Traffic lights

Traffic lights are similar to thumbs up/thumbs down. They can help children to indicate their level of understanding or feelings by showing the appropriate coloured card:

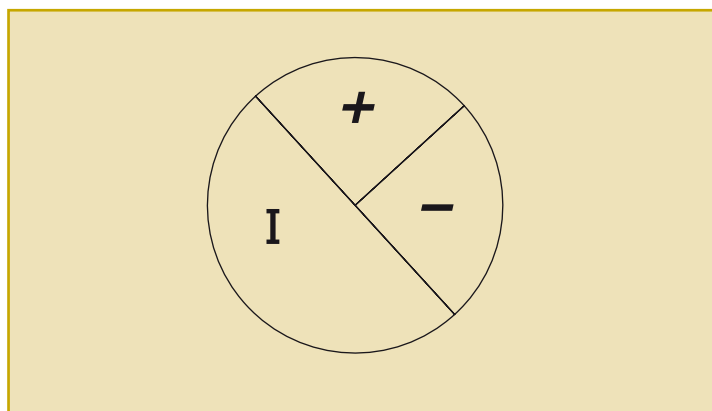
- **red card = I don't understand.**
- **amber card = I'm not quite there yet.**
- **green card = I've got it!**

The children can use the traffic lights at any time during a lesson. This technique is particularly useful during group work and whole class sessions, and also with young children.

Plus, Minus and Interesting (PMI) diagrams

PMI diagrams can be used by children to assess their own work by identifying plus, minus and interesting elements of their work. This technique can help them to identify what worked and what did not work so well for them in their learning. PMI diagrams can be drawn as graphs, charts or tables. Below is an example of a PMI chart.

Sample PMI chart



Talk partners/buddies

Using talk partners/buddies involves children sharing information with each other about their own learning. For example, children might identify three new things they learned, what they found easy, what they found difficult, and something they would like to learn in the future with their talk partners/buddies. Ideally the talk partner/buddy would be someone with whom the child is confident and happy to share his/her thoughts and ideas.

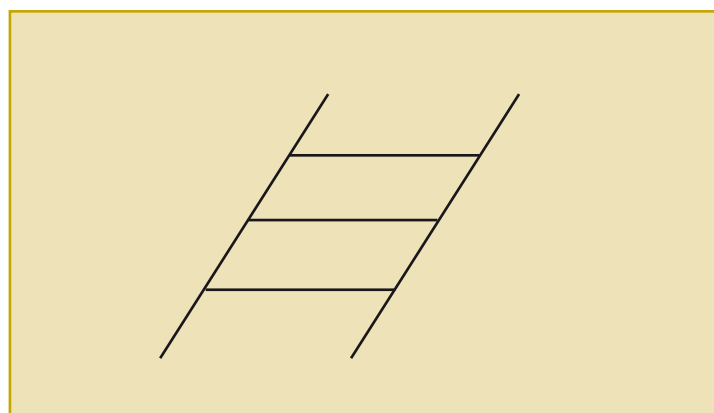
Ladders

A ladder is a self-assessment tool that can help children to rank, prioritise, identify areas of clarity and parts of their work where they are experiencing difficulty. Children make decisions about their learning by responding to questions such as:

- **What part of the work was the most important?**
- **What part of the work did I understand best?**
- **What part of the work did I not understand?**
- **What part of the work was difficult?**

They rank the responses to these questions on the ladder.

Sample ladder



Questioning

The following tables outline different types of questions based on Bloom's taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002), and provide samples of each type.

Bloom's taxonomy of questioning

Evaluation
Synthesis
Analysis
Application
Understanding
Knowledge

Knowledge

Question cues		Sample questions
tell	list	What happened after ...?
define	name	How many ...?
when	where	Who was it that ...?
identify	show	Can you name the ...?
state	locate	Describe what happened at ...
relate	who	Who spoke to ...?
		Can you tell why ...?
		Find the meaning of ...
		What is ...?
		Which is true or false ...?

Understanding

Question cues		Sample questions
retell	summarise	Can you write in your own words ...?
describe	explain	Can you write a brief outline ...?
discuss	interpret	What do you think could have happened next ...?
outline	predict	Who do you think ...?
restate	compare	What was the main idea ...?
estimate	contrast	Who was the key character ...?
		Can you distinguish between ...?
		What differences exist between ...?
		Can you provide an example of what you mean ...?
		Can you provide a definition for ...?

Application

Question cues		Sample questions
solve	show	Do you know another instance where ...?
use	illustrate	Could this have happened in ...?
construct	complete	Can you group by characteristics such as ...?
examine	classify	What factors would you change if ...?
apply	demonstrate	Can you apply the method used to some experience of your own ...?
calculate	modify	What questions would you ask of ...?
		From the information given, can you develop a set of instructions about ...?
		Would this information be useful if you had a ...?

Analysis

Question cues		Sample questions
analyse	distinguish	Which events could have happened ...?
compare	contrast	If ... happened, what might the ending have been?
investigate	categorise	How was this similar to ...?
identify	separate	What was the underlying theme of ...?
order	explain	What do you see as other possible outcomes ...?
connect	infer	Why did ... changes occur?
		Can you compare your ... with that presented in ...?
		How is ...similar to ...?
		What was the problem with ...?
		What evidence can you list for ...?

Synthesis

Question cues		Sample questions
create	invent	Can you design a ... to ...?
compose	predict	Why not compose a song about ...?
plan	construct	Can you see a possible solution to ...?
design	imagine	If you had access to all resources how would you deal with ...?
propose	devise	Why don't you devise your own way to deal with ...?
formulate	combine	What would happen if ...?
		How many ways can you ...?
		Can you create new and unusual uses for ...?
		Can you develop a proposal which would ...?

Evaluation

Question cues		Sample questions
judge	select	Is there a better solution to ...?
choose	decide	Judge the value of ...?
justify	debate	Can you defend your position about ...?
verify	argue	Do you think ... is a good or a bad thing?
recommend	assess	How would you have handled ...?
rate	prioritise	What changes to ... would you recommend?
		What would you predict/infer from ...?
		How effective are ...?
		What do you think about ...?
		How would you create/design a new ...?

Teacher-designed tasks and tests

Planning sheets

Planning sheets can be useful when preparing to use tasks as an assessment method. A sample planning sheet is shown below with a photocopiable version provided in Appendix B, p. 94.

Class(es)	Date	Subject(s)	Curriculum objectives
What class(es) are the children in?	What date will the children complete the task(s)?	What subject(s) is being assessed?	Which curriculum objectives are being assessed through the task(s)?
Resources	Time	Organisation	Actions
What resources do the children need?	How long will it take to complete the task(s)?	What classroom organisation (whole-class, group, pair, or individual) is most suitable from the point of view of children's involvement and the need to carry out teacher assessment effectively and efficiently?	What are the main actions that the teacher needs to take from the initial presentation to the children, through the various stages of the task(s), to the conclusion?
Teacher's notes:			

Sample test questions

Examples 1-11 below illustrate a range of question types which teachers may find useful in designing paper and pencil tests.

Example 1: Closed test questions

Closed test questions are usually used to elicit a specific response that is either correct or incorrect, as in the following sample.

Sample closed test question: 2, 4, 8, ... What will the next number be? The answer 10 might indicate that the connection between the numbers was thought to be a simple increase of 2, instead of doubling the last one.

Example 2: Open test questions

Open test questions allow a wider range of responses than closed questions as shown in the following sample.

Sample open test question: Name one of the Loughs on the River Shannon.

Example 3: Multiple-response questions

Multiple-response questions elicit a range of responses and can be solved in a variety of ways as in the following sample.

Sample multiple-response question: $\square + \square = 9$

Example 4: Free response questions

Free response questions allow an even wider range of responses than multiple-response questions. Questions which require narrative responses can provide the teacher with information about the depth and breadth of the child's understanding, the child's thinking, and the areas where he/she may benefit from further support or work.

Sample free response question: Write a paragraph about the purpose of the soup kitchens in the Great Famine.

It is advisable to structure the question in order to identify whether the child displays real understanding of the topic or issue addressed in the question, rather than encouraging an unstructured reply that may hide gaps in the child's knowledge, for example:

Sample free response question: Name three factors that contributed to the development of the Great Famine.

Example 5: Correcting responses

An interesting variation of test questions is for the teacher to prepare well-written but conceptually flawed responses or answers for the children to correct and edit. These responses may contain common misunderstandings, correct but incomplete responses, or completely incorrect facts and ideas.

Example 6: Matching

The matching format is an effective way to test the child's recognition of the relationships between words and definitions, events and dates, categories and examples, and so on.

Example 7: Multiple-choice questions

Responses to multiple-choice questions provide information on the child's ability to discriminate between the correct response and incorrect alternatives. As such, the child's response demonstrates his/her ability to recognise the correct response rather than to produce it.

Sample multiple-choice question:

$297 + 352 = 649$

The number fact in bold text is true.

Which one of the following number facts is true?

- a) $397 + 362 = 659$
- b) $649 - 352 = 317$
- c) $29.7 + 35.2 = 6.49$
- d) $287 + 342 = 629$

Example 8: True-false questions

True-false questions can be used to gather information about common misconceptions by children.

Sample true-false question:

Look at the sum. Is the answer true or false?

Put a tick (✓) in the box if you think **yes, the answer is true.**

Put an X in the box if you think **no, the answer is false.**

$$\begin{array}{r} 18 \\ +23 \\ \hline 311 \end{array} \quad \square$$

The teacher may add an 'explain' column in which the child writes one or two sentences justifying his/her response.

Example 9: Questions presented in a novel way

Presenting questions in an unconventional form can be used to test children's understanding of a particular concept.

Sample question presented in a novel way:

To assess a child's understanding of place value present him/her with misaligned columns of numbers.

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ 35 \\ +24 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Ask him/her to read the numbers and then to write the answer. When finished ask the child to read the answer aloud. Ask him/her to justify the answer using a probing question, such as *does that sound right?*

Example 10: Scales

Scales can be used to help children respond to open questions. This provides some structure for children while still enabling them to choose from a range of responses.

Below is an example of a scale to help children respond to a piece of art.

Tulips by Afternoon Light, unknown.



Look carefully at this painting. Record your response to it on a 1-7 scale by circling a number. For example, what time of the day is it in the painting? If you think it is morning, give it a 1. If you think it is night, give it a 7. If you think it is somewhere in between, choose a 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6. Write down a reason for your answer after you have circled a number.

What kind of light is in the painting?

Bright? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Dark?

Give a reason for your score.

Are the edges of things

Clear and sharp? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Soft and fuzzy?

Give a reason for your score.

Is the paint

Thin? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Thick?

Give a reason for your score.

Is the mood of the picture

Happy? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Sad?

Give a reason for your score.

Appendix B

Photocopiable resources

This appendix provides some photocopiable resources which can be used with self-assessment, portfolio assessment, and teacher-designed tasks and tests. These include

- A **Know, Want to know, Learned (KWL) grid**. By completing the grid over time the child focuses on what he/she already knows, what he/she would like to know, and what new things he/she learns. (See Section 2, pp. 20-21 for information on self-assessment.)
- A **reflection template** which can be used by the child to help him/her decide whether or not to include a particular piece of work in his/her portfolio. (See Section 2, pp. 30-33 for information on portfolio assessment.)
- A **planning sheet** which can be used by the teacher to help him/her prepare for using tasks to assess children's learning. (See Section 2, pp. 54-58 for information on teacher-designed tasks and tests.)

Child:		Date:
K (What I know already)	W (What I want to know)	L (What I have learned)



Complete at the
start of the lesson



Complete at the
end of the lesson

Teacher's notes:

Child:	Date:
Description of the work:	
What I tried to do:	
What I did:	
What I learned:	
What I like about this piece of work:	
What I would need to work on:	

Teacher's notes:

Class(es)	Date	Subject(s)	Curriculum objectives
Resources	Time	Organisation	What to do

Teacher’s notes:

Appendix C

Legislative requirements of schools in relation to assessment policy

In developing a school assessment policy, schools must be guided by various legislative requirements. **At the time of publication** these are enshrined in

- the Education Act (1998)
- the Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003)
- the Equal Status Act (2000)
- the Education (Welfare) Act (2000)
- the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)
- the Freedom of Information Acts (1997, 2003).

This appendix highlights the requirements for schools, **at the time of publication**, arising from each of these pieces of legislation.

Education Act (1998)

The **Education Act (1998)** requires principals and teachers to *regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents*. The implications of this requirement for teachers and schools include

- developing assessment **procedures** which provide an accurate account of children's progress and achievement
- creating and maintaining individual **records** of children's progress and achievement while they are attending the school
- providing parents with assessment **reports** which contain accurate and clearly accessible information about their children's progress and achievement.

The Education Act also places a responsibility on schools to ensure *that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational needs are identified and provided for*. Specific responsibilities for schools include identifying and responding to pupils with learning difficulties by liaising with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), where appropriate, and co-ordinating the monitoring of pupils' progress and achievement (by the class teacher, the learning support teacher, the resource teacher, and other professionals).

Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003)

Any assessment information or personal data recorded by the school, including both formal school records and less formal records, whether in automated or manual form, is subject to the terms of the **Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003)**. The right of parents to regular information on the progress and achievement of their children under the Education Act is supported by the Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003). The latter entitles parents of

students under the age of eighteen (and students aged eighteen and over) to access all personal data relating to the students, whether stored in any electronic form or in hard and/or manual copy in a structured filing system in school. Information on these entitlements is available on the website of the Data Protection Commissioner at <http://www.dataprivacy.ie>. In addition, under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003, parents have a right to all assessment information about their children in intelligible form and they have the right to know the source of the assessment information, for example the class teacher or learning support teacher.

The following designated persons are also entitled to direct access to individual, group or class assessment information:

- the child's class teacher
- the class teacher, within the same school, to whom the child is transferring
- the principal
- learning support and resource teachers
- the DES inspector
- the NEPS psychologist
- the Education Welfare Board and its officers
- other relevant professionals (including a Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO), an occupational therapist, a speech and language therapist, a teacher of deaf children).

In addition, assessment information on an individual child may be provided to another school, primary or post-primary, to which the child is transferring.

Further implications of the Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003) require schools to state in their assessment policy

- what information is being gathered, for example a percentile on a standardised reading test at the end of each school year
- why the information is being gathered, for example to identify children who would benefit from learning support
- how the information will be gathered, for example through the use of standardised reading tests and/or diagnostic reading tests
- how the information will be stored, for example in hard copy or electronically.

The school policy also needs to identify where the files will be stored and for how long.

A basic checklist to ascertain if a school is fulfilling the requirements of the Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003) is available on the website of the Data Protection Commissioner at <http://www.dataprivacy.ie/ViewDoc.asp?fn=/documents/responsibilities/3k.htm&CatID=55&m=y>.

Equal Status Act (2000)

The **Equal Status Act (2000)** has implications for the assessment policy in schools in that it promotes equality and prohibits certain kinds of discrimination, for example discrimination on the grounds of religion, age, disability, or membership of an ethnic community. Therefore, the form of assessment used to gather information on children must not in any way discriminate against them. Teachers need to be aware of bias when English language intelligence tests are administered with children whose first language is not English. Schools need to be aware of the effects of context, culture and language on assessment and seek to ensure that the processes of assessment are carried out in circumstances that are appropriate for children. For example, staffs need to identify and address any barriers to assessment for children with special educational needs, and provide appropriate alternatives as required. Schools also need to ensure that the chosen methods of assessment are appropriate, given the ages and developmental stages of children.

Further information on the Equal Status Act (2000) is available on the website of the Equality Authority at <http://www.equality.ie>.

Education (Welfare) Act (2000)

Section 28 of the **Education (Welfare) Act (2000)** places a responsibility on the principal of a school to pass on information regarding the welfare of a child to other professionals involved in supporting his/her education. The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (Section 28) (Prescribed Bodies) Regulations 2005 ensures that information can be shared in the following instances when the purpose of sharing the information is to monitor and further the child's learning:

- between schools when a child transfers (primary to primary and primary to post-primary)
- between a school and the National Council for Special Education when seeking the Council's assistance
- between a school and the National Education Welfare Board, the DES Inspectorate, the National Educational Psychological Service, and so on.

Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

Under the terms of the **Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)** schools are required to assess children who are judged not to be benefiting from the education programme provided by the school, in order to understand the reasons for this. If the assessment establishes that the child has special educational needs the principal is responsible for preparing *an education plan for the appropriate education* of the child. He/she prepares the plan in consultation with the child's parents and can consult with the local Special Educational Needs Organiser.

The Act outlines the content headings that the school should use in developing the education plan. These include

- the nature and degree of the child's
 - abilities, skills and talents
 - special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her educational development
- the present level of educational performance of the child
- the special educational needs of the child
- the special education and related support services to be provided to the child to enable the child
 - to benefit from education and to participate in the life of the school.
 - where appropriate, to make the transition effectively from pre-school education to primary school education or from primary school education to post-primary education.

The education plan should also include the goals which the child is to achieve over a period not exceeding twelve months.

Freedom of Information Acts (1997, 2003)

In supporting children's learning and development schools store assessment information and personal data on each child in both formal school records and less formal records. Under the terms of the **Freedom of Information Act (1997)** and the **Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act (2003)** information held about an individual must be made available to that individual on request. In addition, the person has a right to have the information relating to himself/herself amended where it is found to be incomplete, incorrect or misleading. He/she also has a right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting himself/herself. Schools are not currently included under the terms of the Freedom of Information Acts (1997, 2003). Were this to change, these Acts would have implications for a school's assessment policy and practices, particularly in the case of recording and storing assessment information.

Appendix D

Roles of external organisations in supporting children's learning

In developing an assessment policy, schools should consider the roles of a number of organisations in supporting children's learning. These include

- the **National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)**
- the **National Council for Special Education (NCSE)**
- the **National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)**.

National Educational Psychological Service

The **National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)** assists the school in providing *education to students which is appropriate to their abilities and needs ...* (Education Act (1998) p. 9). A close working relationship between the school and the relevant NEPS psychologist is therefore essential. Schools need to name their NEPS psychologist in their school policy and elaborate on assessment approaches and referral procedures outlined in the NEPS guideline documents. The referral process ought to be included in the assessment policy with copies of the forms, which NEPS supplies, filed with the policy. Reasons for referrals need to be specific and clear.

NEPS has developed a three-stage model in order to help schools accommodate children with special educational needs. (See Table 5.) This model should be included in the school policy so that all involved are aware of their responsibilities with regard to children.

Table 5: Staged model of intervention

Three Stages, One Process		
Stage 1 Whole Class Stage	Stage 2 School Support Stage	Stage 3 Consultation/ Assessment Stage
Parents	Parents	Parents
Teacher(s)	Teacher(s)	Teacher(s)
Child	Child	Child
Consultation with NEPS psychologist	Support Teacher(s) Consultation with NEPS psychologist	Direct involvement of NEPS psychologist Other Professionals
Following consultation with the NEPS psychologist acute cases may be fast-tracked to Stage 3.		

Further information on the work of the NEPS is available on the website of the Department of Education and Science at <http://www.education.ie>.

National Council for Special Education

The **National Council for Special Education (NCSE)** liaises with schools to make sure that children with special educational needs have access to education and related support services, using a network of Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs).

SENOs work with schools and parents in supporting the education of children with special educational needs in the following ways. They

- process schools' applications for resource teacher support and decide on the level of support appropriate to the school
- process schools' applications and decide on the appropriate level of special needs assistant support for children with disabilities
- examine schools' applications for special equipment/assistive technology
- examine schools' applications for transport arrangements for children with disabilities and make recommendations to the Department of Education and Science
- identify the appropriate educational setting for individual children with special educational needs.

Further information on the work of the NCSE is available on the organisation's website at <http://www.ncse.ie>.

National Educational Welfare Board

The **National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)** is the national agency with responsibility for encouraging and supporting regular school attendance. The Board was established to ensure that every child attends school regularly, or otherwise receives an education or participates in training. The Board works with schools to assist them in meeting their obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) through a network of Education Welfare Officers. In carrying out their work, these officers may require access to assessment information held by the school on a particular child.

Further information on the work of the NEWB is available on the organisation's website at <http://www.newb.ie>.

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