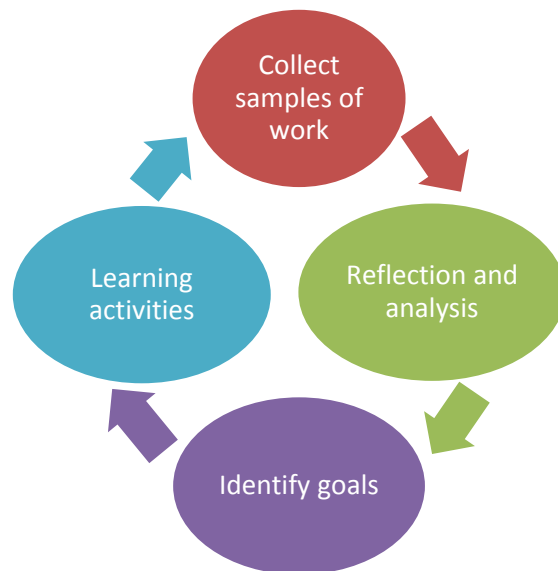


Recording children's progress in Irish

This information leaflet describes **5 ways** in which examples of children's work – written or oral – can be recorded and collected. These ideas are used by teachers in the NCCA Primary School Network to help them assess what children can say or write in Irish, based on a particular theme, skill or language area. This is only a start, however. Please see the information leaflet ***Building on what we know*** and other resources on www.ncca.ie/primary/languages which explain how teachers use the samples in a teaching and learning approach that emphasises analysis and reflection, and full participation of children in both planning and assessment, to ensure continuous development of their ability in Irish.



Why collect samples of children's work?

To help children to progress the teacher must know what language functions they can fulfil; the words and sentences they know; the topics they can discuss and the contexts in which they can use Irish.

There are ten themes in *Curaclam na Gaeilge* which are used by a majority of teachers to structure their planning for Irish. Teachers in the network begin by collecting evidence of the children's learning to date, in order to find out what they can already say, understand and write about the theme. This is carried out in partnership with the children so that they are active participants in their own learning. At the end of the theme or unit of work the new language the children have learned is recorded. This helps both children and teacher to see what progress has been made. It provides an incentive for the children and provides a basis to inform planning and teaching for the teachers.

Assessment in *Curaclam na Gaeilge*

Five different assessment tools are noted in *Curaclam na Gaeilge*, p.146.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher observation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum profiles |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher-designed tasks and tests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diagnostic tests |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portfolios of samples of work and projects completed by the child | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standardised tests. |

The ideas in this leaflet refer especially to the first three tools above. Some may be used as a focus for teacher observation while others could help teachers to design tasks and tests. They also provide a practical demonstration of how a portfolio of children's work may be assembled. In the review of the *Primary School Curriculum* teachers reported that assessing oral language was one of their biggest challenges. Some of the ideas in this leaflet describe how teachers in the network assess children's oral language in Irish.

Some of the samples feature specific assessment methods, such as self-assessment and conferences. A comprehensive description of these methods and of assessment in general is provided in *Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools*. A copy of this book is available in every primary school and online at www.ncca.ie/primary/assessment.



1. Brainstorming to create a record

<u>Abairtí</u>	Arán
D'ithe mé ceapaire	Sná
D'ól mé sú oráiste	Ceapaire
Is maith liom seacláid	lúe
Ní maith liom im	Banana
Níl aon lón agam	Calóga arthar
An osclóidh tú mo bhuidé- al?	Brioscáí
Ar bhfuil míseán nait?	Beilte
Más é do thóil e.	Bricfeasta
Seo duit.	Dinnéar
Tá agam don lón	Lón
	Tae
	Cóisie
	Deoch

The teacher can use brainstorming before beginning a new unit of work to discover what the children already know, to provide a basis for further learning. The teacher asks the children to produce as many words and sentences as they can on a given theme or subject.

Sometimes this is done as a whole class activity where the teacher writes the words on the whiteboard. This is a good way to create a record of the children's oral language, as the teacher acts as scribe.

If the teacher has an interactive white board, the list may be saved and returned to at the end of the unit to see how many words or phrases the children can add to it.

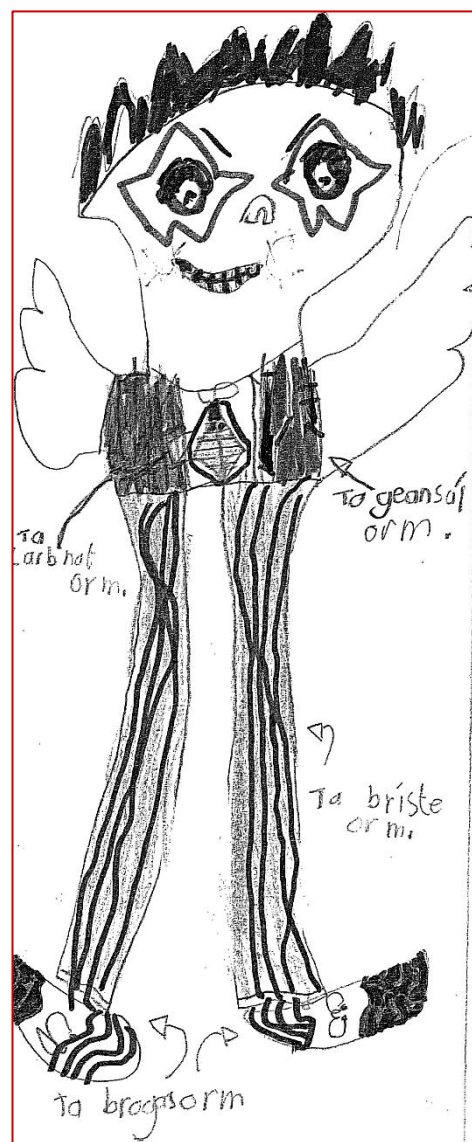
Some other teachers ask the children to brainstorm in pairs or groups and to write down their own words/sentences. An advantage of this method is that every child/group can work at their own pace. The examples below are from a multi-grade class with children from second to fifth class. The difference between the classes is readily apparent.

Similarly, the teacher can ask the children to return to the list at the end of the unit and to add words and sentences. Children enjoy the challenge involved in this approach.

Sometimes the children use a special copybook for these brainstorming records, which they carry through and continue with in successive years. This helps the children to remember the language functions, phrases and vocabulary they have learned previously when beginning the same theme in a new class.

Tá t-líne lúe, briste matha dult agus gearraí bandearg a agam	
cailthearh agam!	
Tá briste matha agus t-líne liath agus lán a cailthearh	
ag lán.	
Tá t-líne fada agus briste lán a cailthearh ag Jessie.	
Tá gearraí gorm agus briste liath a cailthearh ag	
Aine.	
Tá briste matha dult agus t-líne dult a cailthearh ag	
James.	
Liosta Éadaí:	
T-líne	Carbhat
gearraí	Blús
Seicicéad	Fó-lhriste
lúe	Veist
Clógad	Culaith namha

Rang a ceathair: Éadaí



Rang a dó: Éadaí

2. Using peer assessment to compile a record

Another way in which teachers can record children's language development is by listing the questions and subjects which they would like children to be able to discuss at the end of a unit of work or a theme. When the unit is finished the children work in pairs to ask each other questions and record the results. The teacher collects the leaflets to find out how the children have performed and to keep a record of the topics about which they can talk.



Teachers can consult with each other and plan this system on a whole-school basis, to ensure that children can answer additional questions and more topics in all of the themes of the curriculum, as they progress through the school.

Rang a trí

Me Fein		
Cad is ainm duit?		
Cén aois thú?		
Cén sort gruaig atá ort?		
Cén dath ata ar do shuíle?		
Cé mhéad duine atá i do theaghlach?		
An bhfuil peata agat? Cén sort?		

Mé féin – Rang a Sé

1. Cad is ainm duit?	✓
2. Cén aois thú?	✓
3. Cén bhliain ina rugadh thú?	✓
4. Cén mhí ina bhfuil do bhreithlá?	✓
5. Cén sort gruaig ata ort?	✓
6. Cén dath ata ar do shuíle?	✓
7. Cé mhéad aoine atá i do chlann?	✓
8. An bhfuil deartháir agat? Cé mhéad?	✓
9. An bhfuil deirfiúr agat? Cé mhéad?	✓
10. Cé hé an duine is óige i do chlann?	✓
11. Cé hé an duine is sine i do chlann?	✓
12. An bhfuil colceathracha agat?	✓
13. An bhfuil peata agat? Cén sort?	✓
14. An bhfuil seanthuismitheoirí agat?	✓
15. Cá dtéann tú ar scoil?	✓
16. Cén sórt scoil é?	✓
17. Cad ba mhaith leat a dhéanamh nuair a bheidh tú mór?	✓
18. Cá rachaidh tú an bhliain seo chugainn?	✓

These questions are from third class and sixth class in the same school. The development is clearly evident.

3. Self-assessment tasks

Samhain 2009			
Is féidir liom bia agus deoch a ordú.	✓		
Is féidir liom fiasrú gaoi chostas rud éigin.	✓		
Is féidir liom iarraidh i gcomhair rud éigin i siopa.	✓		
Is féidir liom ceist a chur ar dhaoine gaoi bia is fearaí.	✓		

Again these may be used at the beginning or at the end of a unit or theme. Statements can be based on the language functions outlined in *Curaclam na Gaeilge* and will demonstrate the communicative functions which the child is able to perform. The teacher chooses the statements in partnership with the class, or based on information about work the children completed in previous years.

Each child registers her/his progress. In the case of young children, a picture may be used to indicate the words or phrases and the child can tick the relevant box or draw a smiley face. Have a look at the video on www.ncca.ie/bunscoileanna/teangacha showing children in senior infants completing this kind of task.



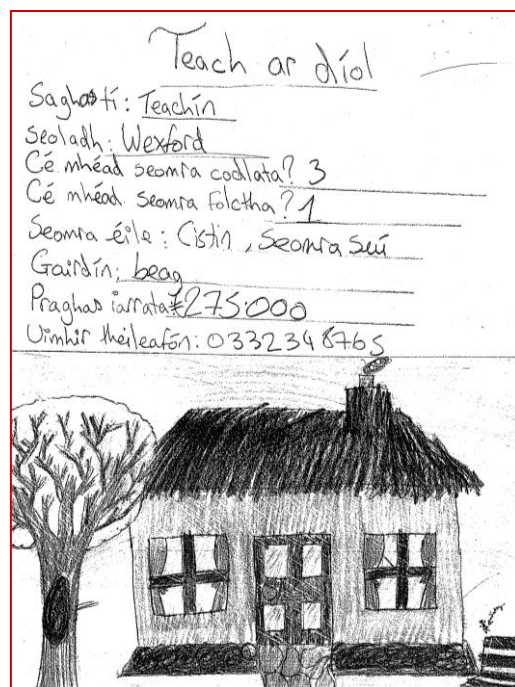
4. Oral tasks to observe progression

In some classes the teacher and the children choose an oral task to be completed at the end of the unit or theme. The task is based on the theme and language functions taught during the unit.

In this example, the children made a *House for Sale* sign after learning phrases and vocabulary to describe a house in the theme *Sa Bhaile*. Each child had to present their house to the class and tried to sell it. Similarly after completing the theme *An Aimsir* the class performed a small news drama. You can find more information about these tasks in the videos on www.ncca.ie/primary/languages.

Children get an opportunity to prepare their oral work beforehand and to reflect on the language they have learnt already during the year. Tasks like these can be performed in groups or individually to allow for different levels of ability.

Teacher observation: While the children are talking the teacher makes notes about sentences and expressions that most of the class have acquired, and about verbs or expressions that would need to be revised in future lessons. This approach helps teachers in the Primary School Network to identify common mistakes and to appreciate the strengths and challenges in the children's oral Irish. Such information is then used in subsequent planning and teaching.



5. Recording dramas or oral tasks

Teachers in the network sometimes record oral tasks or dramas performed by the children. Some teachers use a video camera, while others use software associated with interactive whiteboards to make an audio recording only.

These recordings help with teacher observation, as the teacher can listen to the children and take notes at her/his own convenience. The children can also participate in this process and listen to the recording as a whole class, as a group, or individually in conference with the teacher. Another advantage is that it provides the teacher with a permanent record of pupil achievement at different times over the years.



Further reading and information

This information sheet summarises feedback from schools in the NCCA's Primary School Network about how they developed their practice in language teaching and learning. You will find more resources about supporting progression in language learning at www.ncca.ie/primary/languages.