BRITISH COUNCIL

TeachingEnglish

Assessing learning

Theme-based workbook

Your reflective journal and additional resources

Foreword

Welcome to the workbook for the professional development theme of Assessing learning. Thank you for joining us to develop your skills and continue your professional development with TeachingEnglish.

We know that it's not always easy to find time for professional development, so we've designed this workbook to help you find key insights, recommended materials, reflection spaces, and practical guidance.

This workbook is the second of three teacher pathways for educators looking to develop their skills and knowledge of assessing learning:

1. Getting started with assessing learning – a ready-made pathway of carefully chosen learning resources and tools to get you started.
2. Going further with assessing learning – this workbook provides guided reflection activities to help you personalise your learning pathway and take your skills to the next level.
3. Working on assessing learning with others – a group study guide that includes practical case studies and and professional development activities to explore the theme with others.

Take the pathways that are the best fit for you – or make your own. We're looking forward to learning with you.

The TeachingEnglish team

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What is ‘Assessing learning’?

What does Assessing learning involve?

Assessing learning is about assessment literacy. It includes applying the principles and practice of assessment to design tasks to assess your learners’ level and measure their progress, taking into account the assessment systems used in your context and local education policies and practice. It is about using types of assessment (e.g. formative and summative) appropriately, and providing feedback for learning purposes.

What can a teacher who effectively assesses learning do?

A teacher who effectively assesses learning can:

- [ ] design appropriate assessment tasks.
- [ ] define and apply assessment criteria.
- [ ] use formative and summative assessment appropriately.
- [ ] plan for differentiated and inclusive assessment.
- [ ] reflect on their approach to continually improve learning outcomes.

Self-assessment test

How can you start developing your skills in different elements of Assessing learning?

Reflecting on how you assess learning now is an important starting point. The way that you measure and facilitate learning might be different depending on your learners and whether you are teaching face-to-face or remotely and according to the type of technology you have available. Use the following self-assessment test to evaluate your strengths and areas of development.

Self-assessment test (cont)

Use the self-assessment test below to evaluate your strengths and areas of development. Give yourself between ★ (not confident) and ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (very confident), depending on how you feel about doing each of the things.

I design appropriate assessment tasks.	
I define assessment criteria and apply them consistently.	
I use a combination of formative and summative assessment.	
I prepare my learners for formal assessment, including how to manage stress.	
I plan for differentiated and inclusive assessment.	
I reflect on my approach to improve assessment strategies and learner outcomes.	

What should you do next?

How many stars did you get? Write the total here:

0–6 stars	The teacher pathways will help you to develop your understanding of Assessing learning. Try the self-assessment test again after you've followed it to see your progress.
7–18 stars	You have a good awareness of Assessing learning. Follow the teacher pathways with us and join our TeachingEnglish activities. Come back to the self-assessment test to see what you've learned.
19–24 stars	You have already developed lots of skills and knowledge that help you assess learning. Which section would you like more help with from the teacher pathways?
25–30 stars	You are an Assessing learning champion! You are already integrating this knowledge in your teaching. Share your knowledge and skills with other teachers in our TeachingEnglish community.

What are your learning goals?

Considering the elements of Assessing learning that are most relevant for your teaching context will help you focus your study time more effectively. Check pages two and three for a reminder of what Assessing learning involves, your strengths and development areas. Complete the following prompts.

Which elements of Assessing learning are most important for you and your learners?

The most useful elements of Assessing learning in my context are ...

Improving my assessment knowledge and skills will help me and my learners ...

Consider Assessing learning. What are your strengths?

My strengths in Assessing learning are ...

What skills and knowledge related to Assessing learning do you want to develop?

I need to develop ...

How can TeachingEnglish help you develop?

Whatever aspect of English teaching you want to improve, TeachingEnglish has the resources and support to help you make a difference, whether you have five minutes, an hour or more.

Find the best combination for your needs, available time and context by exploring the following options.

Online communities (5 minutes+)

A dedicated, vibrant and inclusive online English language teaching community to empower teachers and teacher educators to collaborate and share knowledge. Join the conversation and access interactive live sessions and links to further professional development opportunities on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

Which TeachingEnglish online communities or social media channels will you use to connect with us?

The TeachingEnglish online communities I'd like to join are ... I might use them to ...

TeachingEnglish resources (10 minutes+)

Access lesson plans, podcasts, articles and publications to help you develop your skills and knowledge of assessing learning. Choose from the resources on page eight or search TeachingEnglish to develop your skills.

Which kinds of resources would you use to develop your skills and knowledge of assessing learning?

I'd like to listen to, read, watch or use resources like ...

Live events and webinars (1 hour)

Our webinars are given by TeachingEnglish community members working in classrooms throughout the world. Our free webinars for teachers are held monthly, and you will receive a certificate for participating. Many webinars are followed by additional Q&A sessions that give teachers a chance to reflect and ask questions as they bring new ideas from the webinar into their teaching. Learn more about attending live on Zoom, Facebook and YouTube, or watching a recording.

Which TeachingEnglish live events and webinars would you like to join or watch?

The TeachingEnglish live events and webinars I'd like to join or watch are ...

Training courses (12 hours+)

Explore a range of courses related to assessing learning. Each course takes approximately 12 hours to complete, and you can access and complete the self-study modules at your own pace. Join our Courses for teachers Facebook community to share your learning with other teachers and get feedback and guidance from our experienced tutors. Learn more about current courses you can enrol on or join immediately.

Which TeachingEnglish training courses would you like to join?

The TeachingEnglish training courses I'd like to join are ...

Resources

Below you will find a selection of resources to develop your understanding and application of assessing learning. Use your answers on page three to guide your learning and the tick boxes to keep track of which resources you have used.

Time (mins)	Type	Resource description (tap/click to open)	Used?
5	Read	Theme overview: Assessing learning	☐
5	Watch	Video: Assessing through drawing	☐
5	Watch	Video: Virtual formative assessment	☐
10	Read	Article: Assessing learners online	☐
10	Use	Activities: Assessing advanced students	☐
10	Use	Activities: Assessing learners online	☐
15	Read	Article: Asking effective questions	☐
15	Read	Article: Assessment for learning	☐
15	Read	Article: Improving testing and alternatives	☐
15	Read	Article: Inclusive assessment practices	☐
15	Read	Article: Test question types	☐
15	Read	Article: Why test learners?	☐
15	Read	Article: Writing tests	☐
15	Read	Article: Young learner testing	☐
30	Listen	Podcast: Assessing more fairly and effectively	☐
30	Watch	Videos: Assessing learning	☐
30	Watch	Videos: Inclusive classroom practices	☐
60	Read	Research: Attitudes, practices and needs of assessment	☐
60	Read	Toolkit: Assessing young learners	☐
60	Read	Toolkit: Assessment for learning	☐
60	Use	Group study guide: Assessing learning	☐
60	Watch	Webinar: Assessment	☐
60	Watch	Webinar: Creative feedback	☐
60	Watch	Webinar: Effective strategies for written feedback	☐
60	Watch	Webinar: Language testing, teaching and learning	☐
60	Watch	Webinar: Managing stress in exam classes	☐
60	Watch	Webinar: Multimodal assessment tasks	☐
60	Watch	Webinar: Reflection that works	☐
300	Watch	Webinars: Assessment for learning	☐

Resources (cont)

At TeachingEnglish, we're constantly updating and adding to the selection of free articles, publications, lesson plans, live sessions and webinars available for teachers. Check our TeachingEnglish website and TeachingEnglish YouTube for the latest resources.

Use this space to note teaching ideas – and where you found them – that may help you and your learners with assessing learning. You can record ideas from training courses, articles, podcasts, webinars or other teachers in live sessions or online communities.

An idea that may help improve my teaching is ... I discovered it in ...

What are you going to change?

Now plan to change your teaching. Starting with a SMART goal will help you make the change and better understand the impact it makes.

A SMART goal is:

- **S**pecific (What exactly do you want to achieve?)
- **M**easurable (How will you know if it happened and the difference it made?)
- **A**chievable (Is it challenging but possible?)
- **R**elevant (Does it help you and your learners?)
- **T**imebound (When will you do it?)

Look back through this workbook and think about your learners. Choose one thing you'd like to be different about your teaching or classroom experience. Write it as a SMART goal.

Something I'd like to be different in my classroom or teaching is ...

A change I can make that will help achieve that is ...

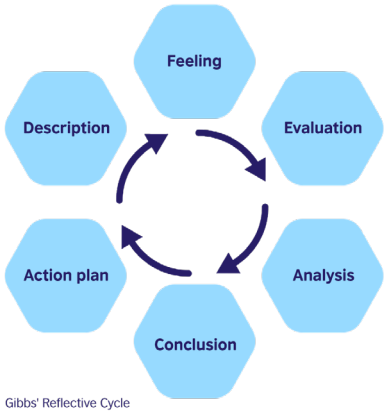
I will need ...

Some challenges might be ...

To solve those challenges, I could ...

What have you learned from making a change?

Using this reflective cycle as you work through the theme and introduce new ideas into your teaching will help you learn from experience and develop further. It can deepen your learning by guiding you to apply new ideas, assess their impact and adjust your approach. Use it after lessons, when trying new strategies or when facing challenges. By making reflection a habit, you'll continue to grow as a practitioner and better support your learners.



Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

Make the change you planned in the last section, then reflect upon it. Sharing your answers to the following questions will guide you through the reflective cycle.

The change I made was ... When I made the change, my learners ...

Description

After making the change, I felt ... My learners felt ...

Feeling

Some good/bad things about the change were ... I know this because ...

Evaluation

I think things happened this way because ...

Analysis

The main things I learned from making this change to my teaching are ...

Conclusion

In future I will ... I will develop the skills and knowledge I need by ...

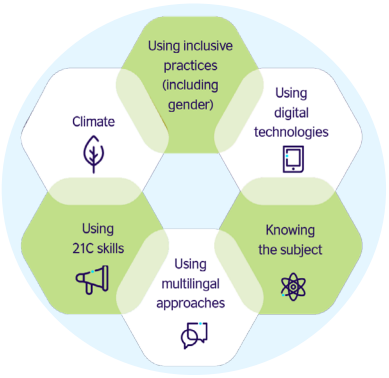
Action plan

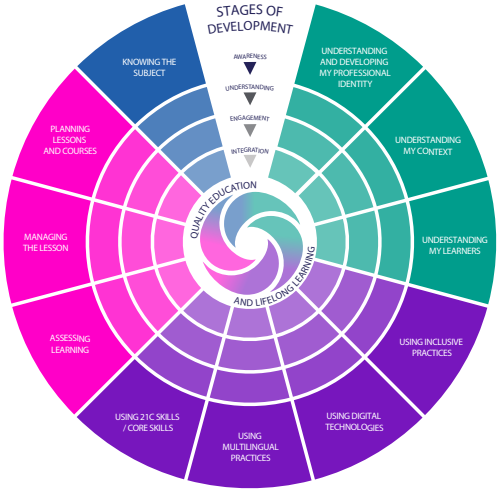
What can you do now?

Well done — you've developed the professional practice of Assessing learning. We hope you've found this teacher pathway workbook useful.

On pages 10 and 11 you planned to introduce a change into your teaching and then reflect upon it. You can follow the same steps to experiment with other ideas you've discovered while exploring Assessing learning. We'd love to hear how this goes – you can connect and share your experience, questions and insights with us, and our global network of English teachers in any of our online communities. Follow #AssessingLearning.

The British Council professional practices are deeply interconnected and not meant to stand alone. Therefore, we encourage you to take a look at and consider how you might use our CPD Framework for teachers.





Continue your learning with us by:

- Joining the conversation and following our English teacher communities on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.
- Subscribing to our newsletter
- Enroling on a free TeachingEnglish training course.
- Accessing TeachingEnglish webinars for teachers and teacher educators.
- Listening to TeachingEnglish podcasts for teachers.
- Exploring our framework for teacher knowledge and skills and other professional practices for inspiration, support and materials.
- Finding out what else is happening on TeachingEnglish.