

Alderson’s implications for testing and assessment - Bizerte

1. Reading might be tested within a content-focused battery: Texts that carry meaning for readers, that interest them, that relate to their academic background, leisure interests, intellectual level and so on, might motivate a deeper reading than the traditional, relatively anodyne or even contentless texts.

Paraphrase: Teachers should choose motivating and meaningful texts in order to encourage learners to get deeply involved in what they are reading and assessing them in multiple ways.

Suggestions:

Choose texts that appeal to learners such as the Internet, mobile phones, sports, songs, etc.

Assessment:

Choosing the correct alternative to get the main idea of the text (reading for gist)

Matching each paragraph with its main idea (reading for main idea)

Reordering statements (assessing sequence)

Completing purposeful gapped paragraphs (assessing certain aspects of language, e.g., linkers, vocabulary, etc.)

Expressing opinions (assessing reactions/emotional implications)

Looking at pictures (assessing predictions)

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2. Students should be tested on a range of relevant skills and strategies, with the results possibly being provided in a diagnostic, profile-based format.

Paraphrase: Construct tests with tasks to diagnose strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, and language proficiency levels.

Suggestions- think about the following:

What is the author's attitude? (for/against - justify)

Does this story remind you of any real story you know? (linking to one's background)

Make a graphic representation of the text (reformatting)

What would you do if you were (a character/the hero)?

What's the best part of the story? Why?

Draw pictures to represent the text.

What's the moral/lesson/message?

Fill in a visual organizer - Venn diagram - fish bone - tree

Create a table to record students' skills:

Names	inferring	reacting to text	identifying w/chars	personal-ization	skimming	gist	scanning	reformatting/transferring info

Key: $\sqrt{\sqrt{\sqrt{\quad}}}$ = Exceeds standards
 $\sqrt{\sqrt{\quad}}$ Meets standards
 $\sqrt{\quad}$ Below standards
 \circ needs attention

Contributed by: Nour El Houda Chakroun, Alya El Aouini, Youssef Arifi, Moncef Charai, Rachida Mhibik, Naziha Ben Fredj, Hela Zakraoui, Sonia Annabi

3. Students should be encouraged to read longer texts, rather than short snippets, and tasks should attempt to get at the degree of enjoyment experienced. Tasks should be do-able in the time available and not discourage students because of their difficulty level.

Paraphrase: Encourage learners to read longer texts to enjoy themselves. The texts shouldn't be too difficult.

Suggestions:

- Matching pictures with different paragraphs
- Match titles/topic sentences with paragraphs
- Read jumbled paragraphs and reorder them to get the text
- Draw a picture to show understanding
- Choose a title for the text
- Role-play, act
- Look for word equivalents

Contributed by: Hassani Samia, Labidi Mounira, Kifoura Aurdef, Hana Chebly, Lalchidar Naffakhi Melika

4. Background knowledge should be recognised as influencing all comprehension, and therefore every attempt should be made to allow background knowledge to facilitate performance rather than allowing its absence to inhibit performance.

Paraphrase: When dealing with assessment, teachers must be careful to choose a topic or a reading text with which pupils are familiar. However, there is no problem for pupils and learners to gain new background knowledge while studying or reading a text.

Contributed by: Bijaoui Hoffh, Blu Atarid Ratiba, Anaabi Monira, Saida Karoui, Garouachi Raouf, Hela El Kefi, Rim Ghodhbane

5. Tests should be open to the possibility of multiple interpretations. Test designers should be as open as possible in the range of different interpretations and understandings they accept.

Paraphrase: Devise tests which allow multiple interpretations. Accept appropriate justified responses as long as they are relevant (fit within the cultural background).

Suggestions for types of questions:

- What is your attitude ...?
- What do you think of ...?
- What would you do if you were ... ?
- How would you react ...?
- How would you describe (characters) ...? =>Accept any convincing response.
- Suggest another ending to the story.

Contributed by: Mrs. Zaiem Sonia, Mrs. Khmiri Hinda, Mrs. Smirani Bisma, Mrs. Zammouri Saloua, Mr. Gharbi Abdelmajid, Mr. Daghan Khaled

6. Group tasks might be devised for a discussion of student interpretations of text. Teachers might keep a record of salient points brought out, and each student's reactions and interpretations. Such a procedure is more suitable to ongoing continuous assessment than to high-stakes testing situations.

Paraphrase: Teachers should devise tasks that encourage student interpretation of the written text. They should also keep a record of the most important student reactions and interpretations.

Suggestions for classroom use:

- Jigsaw reading (short texts related to the same topic)

- Group discussion and interpretation

- Teacher evaluates the pupils' involvement/reactions

- =>Assessment as an ongoing process

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7. Extensive reading should not be discouraged by the assessment procedures. Portfolios of texts read, and appreciations of the readings, might be one way of keeping a record for evaluative purposes of such reading.

Paraphrase: Assessment procedures with portfolios consolidate extensive reading and helps evaluation.

Suggestions:

- In the classroom:

- Reading short stories

- Summarizing written materials -> writings, drawings

- Paraphrasing

- Role play

- Film synopsis

Contributed by: Ben Slama Jihene, Emna Manai, Nadia Karra, Hamada Sarhoue, Hamada Amel

8. The importance of identification skills needs to be explored, and means need to be found of testing them. Timed readings, especially in computer-based test settings, might provide useful diagnoses of developing automaticity, and thought needs to be given to measuring the rate at which readers read, as well as to their comprehension of the text. Speed should not be measured without reference to comprehension, but at present comprehension is all too often measured without reference to speed.

Paraphrase: It's important for learners to be able to use specific techniques to recognize lexical items as quick as they can. So comprehension can be assessed through speed reading, MCQ, true/false statements, etc.

Suggestions:

- Choose texts that suit the levels of the pupils

- Choose motivating texts dealing with up-to-date topics

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