

Alderson's implications for testing and assessment - Monastir

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: Selected texts should relate to the learner's background knowledge, culture, interests, age, environment, academic background (in other words, schemata). This leads to a deeper understanding of the text and productive feedback.

Suggestions:

Give learners texts about love (for teenagers), sports, fashion; up-to-date topics such as tsunamis, bird flu, SARS.

Contributed by: Allegue Afef, Barhoumi Fethia, Jawed Abdelkrim, Mejri Berri, Trabelsi Sonia

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: When we teach reading, we are not just interested in getting correct answers ("product"), we equip the pupils with different skills and strategies that can be used later in their tests and in their own lives, thus creating life-time readers. So, when we test reading, we'd like to know to what extent the pupils have mastered those skills and strategies. The test is not only summative but also formative.

Suggestion: create a table like this:

/Strategies Names/	Predicting	Skimming	Summarizing	Critical thinking	Scanning
Hela	B	C	A	B	A
Ali	C	C	B	C	B
Amine	A	A	A	B	A

Contributed by: Hela Marzouk, Labidi Ahlen, Hassene Rashed, Aissa Kaouither, Hanen Ladhari, Sonia Ben Abdelfatteh, Dridi Ali

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: We should encourage students to read longer texts with enjoyable and do-able tasks regardless of their difficulty in the available time.

Suggestions:

Group work: Divide the class into groups. Every group is asked to read 1 part and summarize it and end up with a whole summary done by all the pupils.

Guessing and predicting tasks: what will happen at the end of the story?

Matching visuals with events to have a coherent text

Matching subtitles with their paragraphs

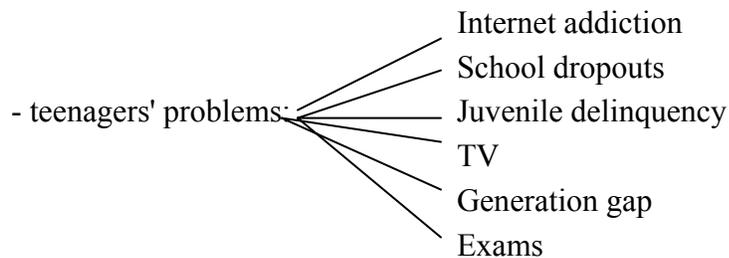
Complete a gapped summary of the text

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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: Starting with what the learners already know is a priority to understand/react to a written work. So, teachers should provide their learners with materials and strategies that go along with their background knowledge in order to help them build/construct the framework of the new information.

Suggestions:



Find articles, graphics; write letters related to problem-solving

Contributed by: Raoudha Gueibej, Meriem Gaius, Shil Dalila, Boughamous Sonia, Chatti Maha, Skhiri Amel

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: Students are expected to provide answers, feedback according to their understanding or comprehension of the material read regardless of the teacher's pre-set expectations. These interpretations should be within a logical frame tolerated by the rest of the students and teachers.

Suggestions for task samples that can have multiple interpretations:

- a. Give a title to the text
- b. State the main idea
- c. Open-ended questions
- d. Critical questions (attitudes, opinions, reactions)
- e. Completing a summary
- f. Information transfer

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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.

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: Teachers need to find ways to assess reading / extensive reading without killing or destroying their learners' love for reading.

Suggestions: Note: Choose texts carefully, depending on level

Texts should be motivating, level-based, and appeal to students' interests and needs

Assessment through:

- Portfolios of the texts read
- Appreciations / evaluation questions
- Write their own stories: changing names, places, events
- Provide learners with proverbs, idioms, and moral lessons
- Predict the end of the story
- Reorder pictures (non-verbal response) to get a summary of the text read or to reconstruct the story.

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