

The first five points listed above should be considered for developing any type of assessment tasks regardless of whether they are formative or summative. The way you give feedback, however, may be somewhat different. Once you have selected the general criteria by which task performance is to be assessed and then modified the criteria so that they match the specific task requirements, you will need to relate those task-specific criteria to bands / levels of performance. This will enable you to give feedback to your learners in terms of where they stand and what standard they have reached.

There are a number of other factors that you need to bear in mind when designing assessment tasks. These include ensuring that:

- the tasks are of an appropriate level of difficulty for the learners;
- the prompt / instructions are not more difficult than the tasks themselves;
- the instructions to learners are clear; and
- the tasks selected do not bias in favour of any particular group of learners.

As suggested in Unit Two, developing assessment tasks and procedures should be a collaborative activity. This is particularly important when the same assessment is to be used for groups taught by different teachers. If an assessment is for all Secondary Two students, for example, then all the teachers involved in teaching those students should provide input in designing the task and the marking scheme. They should also be involved in a process of moderation so that there is consistency in applying the agreed assessment criteria.

Reflect

Brainstorm, preferably with a partner or in a group:

Are all school-based summative assessments of equal stakes? If not, what factors do you think determine the stakes of the assessment? In what ways do the assessments differ?

3.3 Criteria for evaluating summative assessment tasks

Reflect

Once you have administered a test / examination, how do you evaluate it?

How learners perform on the assessment you have devised and administered is an important source of information. An analysis of responses will enable you to identify which tasks elicited the responses you were anticipating. However, this is not the only source of information, nor is it infallible. You also need to observe the learners as they complete the assessment and find out from the learners where they encountered

difficulties and why these difficulties arose. Discussing assessment tasks with learners not only provides you with valuable information about the task, but also helps the learners better understand the relationship between the assessment and their own learning.

There is one further source of information that you need to consider when evaluating assessment tasks, that of your colleagues. They may provide valuable insights relating to the tasks as well as the assessment guidelines, particularly if they too have been involved in the assessment process.

Collecting so much information may appear redundant, but in the long run the information should facilitate the improvement of tasks for the future, which is particularly important if you are considering banking these for future use. It may also help explain mismatches between the results you expect your learners to attain and their actual performance on the assessment and will place you in a better position to provide feedback to the relevant stakeholder in the assessment process.

Reflect

When you conduct summative assessment, in what form do you give feedback to your learners?

Traditionally, teachers have relied heavily on marks and grades for summative assessment, but there is a move nowadays towards relying less on marks and grades and providing stakeholders with more qualitative feedback. This is in line with the move towards criterion-referenced, performance testing since what we are interested in is not whether a learner got 60% or 62%, but what that percentage means in terms of what the learner can or cannot do. It is, after all, very difficult on a writing assessment to determine how a script that receives 62% is different from one that receives 60%. It is more meaningful if the assessment describes the level the learner has reached. Hence there is the shift towards assessing work in terms of bands / levels and providing a description for each level of performance.

Part 2 Exemplar Summative Assessment Tasks for KS3

This part of Unit 3 consists of four sets of summative assessment tasks, with Set A, Set B and Set C being pitched at S1 level and Set D at S2 level. Each set of summative assessment tasks is accompanied with the aims of assessment and task-specific criteria for assessing the various tasks and subtasks for teachers' reference. Teachers are strongly encouraged to adapt the summative assessment tasks presented here to meet their own objectives.

Below is an overview of the four sets of summative assessment tasks:

Assessment Tasks: Set A

Task 1 – The Most Beautiful Cities in the World

Subtask 1: An email from a friend

Subtask 2: Writing back to your email pal

Task 2 – Student Activity Camp

Subtask 1: Getting to know some new friends

Subtask 2: Calling home to get messages

Subtask 3: Introducing a new friend

Assessment Tasks: Set B

Task 1 – The “Beach Clean Up” Day

Subtask 1: Receiving a message

Subtask 2: Checking your notes

Subtask 3: Writing a short article

Task 2 – My New Email Pal

Subtask 1: Understanding an email message

Subtask 2: Writing a reply

Task 3 – Calling John about an Activity

Assessment Tasks: Set C

Task 1 – Organizing an Outing

Subtask 1: Choosing a place for an outing

Subtask 2: Suggesting a place for an outing

Subtask 3: Planning what to buy

Subtask 4: Writing a notice

Task 2 – Radio Call-in: “Come Share with Us”

Subtask 1: A listening quiz

Subtask 2: Giving an oral report on what students are doing this summer

Assessment Tasks: Set D

Task 1 – Planning a Trip to Singapore

Subtask 1: Finding out about Singapore

Subtask 2: An introduction to the Night Safari Park

Subtask 3: Replying to your friend

Task 2 – Telling Your Friends about Singapore