

the eating habits, etc. The real value of such a task, which admittedly takes time to set up, is that learners are given a genuine opportunity to use English.

Task 4: Portfolio

Overview of task

A portfolio may be defined as “a purposeful collection of students’ work that demonstrates to students and others their efforts, progress, and achievements in given areas” (Genesee and Upshur, 1996). They may be focused on one particular skill or aspect of language or be more general, covering a range of skills. In this task, learners build up a portfolio in which they comment on the extensive reading they do throughout a term / year. In the portfolio they keep a record of what they have read and their responses to their reading. Responses may be in the form of questions, a commentary, a poem or short story or even an illustration.

Task guidelines for learners

Your Portfolio

During the year you will keep a portfolio of all the extensive reading you complete. For each book, short story, poem you read, you should fill out the following form and then add it to your portfolio. Your portfolio will be looked at twice a term.

Reading report form

I have read (give details of the title, author, length)

I read this in (give details of when you read this and how long it took you to read)

It is about (give a summary of what you have read)

My comments on this reading are (here you are free to say why you liked / disliked what you read; why you chose the reading; or you may write your own poem, short story based on your reading. Feel free to illustrate your comments / review)

Notes for teachers

(i) Assessment focus

This task is intended to assess the ability of learners to respond to characters, events and issues in imaginative and other narrative texts through written means by expressing one’s reactions to what one has read.

Unit Two Part 2
Task 4: Portfolio

The task is designed to meet the following Learning Targets:

- to interpret and use more extensive information through processes or activities such as sequencing, describing, classifying, comparing, explaining, predicting, inferring, summarizing and drawing conclusions (KSb in KS3)
- to identify and discuss ideas in spoken and written texts, form opinions and express them (KSc in KS3)
- to develop a response to imaginative literature including poems, songs and dramatic texts through activities such as:
 - ❖ participating in the presentation of texts
 - ❖ identifying and discussing themes
 - ❖ understanding and appreciating the effect of sound patterns including rhythm and rhyme (ESa in KS3)
- to respond to characters, events and issues in imaginative and other narrative texts through oral, written and performative means such as:
 - ❖ making predictions and inferences
 - ❖ making evaluative comments
 - ❖ explaining one's feelings towards characters and events
 - ❖ expressing one's reactions to issues
 - ❖ relating to one's experiences
 - ❖ putting oneself in the imaginary roles and situations in the story
 - ❖ participating in dramatic presentations (ESb in KS3)
- to give expression to imaginative ideas through oral, written and performative means such as:
 - ❖ writing stories with a clear sequence of events and some description of characters
 - ❖ providing oral and written descriptions of a situation, object or character
 - ❖ creating simple poems and lyrics using given models
 - ❖ creating short dramatic episodes based on given situations (ESc in KS3)
- to give expression to one's experience through activities such as providing oral and written descriptions of feelings and events (ESd in KS3)

(ii) Relation to the curriculum

The *CDC Syllabus for English Language (Secondary 1-5) 1999* (pp. 82-83) stresses the need to provide learners with the opportunity to read extensively. The portfolio is one way to encourage learners to take charge of their own reading and react to it in their own way.

(iii) Advice on setting up the task

As long as there is a reading corner and a selection of appropriate reading material for the learners to choose from, this task is very simple to set up. However, it is important that the teacher monitors progress and encourages learners to use a range of responses. Learners should be proud of their portfolios. They could be asked to write a short piece about their portfolio at the end of the year as an introduction to the portfolio.

Proposed feedback mechanism

It is not necessary to provide learners with feedback on every task they complete. What would appear more productive is to give more global comments each time you see the portfolio. The feedback could focus on the following:

- Whether the learner has done adequate reading;
- Whether the learner has completed the forms giving the necessary information; and
- The quality of the responses to the reading, and in particular on what you think is good about the responses (noting improvement / lack of improvement over time).

Adaptation of task

Learners could be asked to keep a record of all their extensive reading but for a final assessment, select a limited number of entries (say 4) that they are most proud of. That would give them the feeling of ownership, which is important when developing a portfolio for any purpose.

Reflect

Develop your own assessment task using one of the above tasks as a model. In addition to the task itself, identify

- *the assessment focus;*
- *how the task relates to the curriculum;*
- *the criteria by which you will evaluate learner performance; and*
- *how you will provide feedback to your learners on their performance.*