



The poster features a portrait of Ildiko Porter-Szucs in the top left corner. The background is a collage of colorful sticky notes. Two logos are positioned at the top center: the ESP logo (English Specific Purposes) and the Testing & Evaluation & Assessment logo. The word 'WEBINAR' is written in large, bold, black, hand-drawn letters across the middle. Below it, the date, time, speakers, and title are listed in green text.

ESP
ENGLISH FOR
SPECIFIC
PURPOSES

Testing
& Evaluation
& Assessment

WEBINAR

Date: Wednesday 12th May 2021
Time: 18:00-19:00 (UK Local time/BST)
Speakers: Ildiko Porter-Szucs
Title: Content or Language: Do you Know
Which One You're Assessing?



Ildiko Porter-Szucs, Ph.D.,
Associate Professor of ESL/TESOL at
Eastern Michigan University iporters@emich.edu

Who is Who?

Please introduce yourself

- name
- geographic location
- setting (YL, primary, secondary, tertiary, language school, CLIL, EMI, EAP, ESP, ESL, EFL, IB, content, etc.)
- whom do you assess / teach
- why you are here

Write your responses
in the chat box.



Content vs. Language Assessment in Action

How would you respond to this professor? Write your response in the Chat box.

I have a student whose first language is Arabic, and I believe they may have been using Google Translate for their posts (very oddly worded phrases, which only make sense if you expand the semantic range of the words). In other words, I think they were composing in Arabic and using GT to translate into English.

Two questions:

1. What are your opinions about the propriety of this? They are a freshman in a STEM field. (I teach a required humanities course.)
2. Thoughts about how to confirm this without judgment (allowing the student to save face, if possible) and suggest that this might be inappropriate academic behavior?

Contexts vary greatly

Maritime English Basics Course

PRACTICAL AND RELEVANT ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR MARITIME PROFESSIONALS

Spot On Learning offers specific maritime English courses to build practical, relevant language skills for seafarers and other professionals in the maritime industry. This 'Maritime English Basics' course on the platform EnglishCentral tests and - if necessary - (re)builds basic skills that are important for workers on board an on shore.



Staff at Graham's Dairy Bridge of Allan Depot, have recently been improving their English language skills through attending a workplace ESOL class provided by Stirling Council's Learning and Employability Team. The programme aimed to improve participants' speaking and listening skills. The tutor took time to understand the roles of staff in the workplace so learning could be designed around the language needs of the participants at work. As a result of participating in the programme, staff now feel more confident in the workplace. They are better able to communicate and build positive relationships with colleagues and managers at work, they know more about health and safety processes in the workplace and feel the programme has helped them to improve their understanding of the roles and remits they have to undertake.

ESLN 562 – Research Communication for International Students in Science and Technology

Students engage in scientific and technical inquiry necessary for effective scientific research writing in the U.S. Students practice the processes of reading and critically analyzing scientific journal abstracts and articles and write experimental research reports. Students improve verbal and non-verbal skills for scientific and technical research communication.

Business English

Study business English at your own pace, choose your level and the topic in which you are interested. You will find a lesson and practice of business correspondence, vocabulary and reading comprehension in three levels. The vocabulary has audio, with business articles recorded by native speakers. All focus on practical business and office situations. The study of each level ends with a final test.



FTC Training Courses

FTC's Flight Training Program provides the training airlines look for in pilot applicants. Fly with FTC and gain access to more aircraft, locations, and job placements than any other flight school in Kenya.



"Children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of their innocence and the greater possibilities of their future"
- Maria Montessori.

Our Program

SEEFs aims to combine two schools of thought for the development of children.

Children within a Montessori classroom are supported by trained teachers and offered a wide range of age-appropriate, carefully designed activities both inside and outside the classroom.

Children work on their own and in small groups to discover and explore the stimuli from the environment prompting them to reach their own unique potential. Through use of these specially designed activities and materials the children work at their own pace to learn about all aspects of language, math, music, science, the wider world, creative pursuits and much more.

The Reggio Emilia school of thought is a student centered and constructive idea that uses self directed learning in relationship driven environments. The program is based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery.

Why Register?

A stimulating and rich learning environment

Parental cooperation and involvement

Caring and committed teachers

Focus on language development

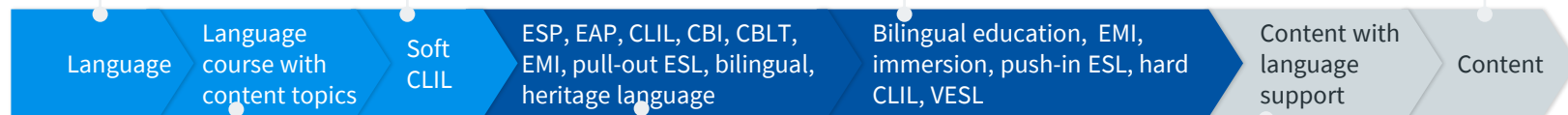
Language – Content Continuum*

Traditional foreign- or second-language course to children or adults; content is basic, interpersonal, varied, subordinated to language study

Soft (weak) CLIL:
Language-driven content and language integrated learning (school, university)

A variety of program formats that allow for a range of content-language integration with content at the center but with language scaffolding (ex. Educational, occupational)

NNSs learning content immersed in a foreign- or second-language setting, with no language study intended (e.g., proficient immigrant undergoing job training with NSs, educational)



Language course focusing on content (e.g., topic or theme suggested by language textbook) (EAP)

A variety of program formats that allow for a range of content-language integration where language is at the center (e.g., educational, university setting)

Content-focused programs with an acknowledgement / possibility of language support (e.g., occupational, educational)

*This proposed continuum between language and content is a rough visualization, a fluid categorization with blurred boundaries and at times overlapping categories.



“

a **construct** is what we want to assess

Bachman, 2007

A decorative network diagram at the top of the slide, featuring a series of interconnected nodes and lines. A central node is highlighted with a dashed circle and a blue double quote symbol.

“

a source of test invalidity includes
construct irrelevant difficulty

Messick 1998

What's the construct?-1

Consider the following item on a vocabulary test of young learners (6-10 year olds).

Claire bought three dozen eggs. How many eggs did she buy?

*a. 36**

b. 30

c. 12

d. 3

What is this item assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

What's the construct?-2

Examine the following reading-comprehension test item in a secondary school in Lithuania.

What is this item assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims ____ from dawn to dusk.

a. party

b. pray

c. feast

*d. fast**

What's the construct?-3

Examine the following item in a maritime English course.

Write the correct word in the blank.

The back part of a ship is called the ____.

[correct answer: stern]

What is this item assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

How would you score a response of "STERN"? Write your response in the Chat box.

What's the construct?-4

What is this item assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

Consider the following listening item in a call center training course.

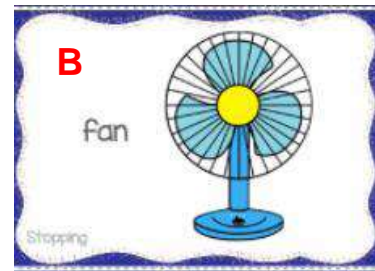
[The recording plays:]

Agent: *Good morning, how may I direct your call?*

Customer: *Good morning. I'd like to talk to someone about pans.*

Agent: *Let me connect you.*

What is the customer looking for?



What's the construct?-5

Consider the following map-labeling task in an English-medium geography class for young learners (12-14 year olds).

From the word bank, write the names of the countries on the lines. One example has been done for you.
One name is extra and has no match on the map.

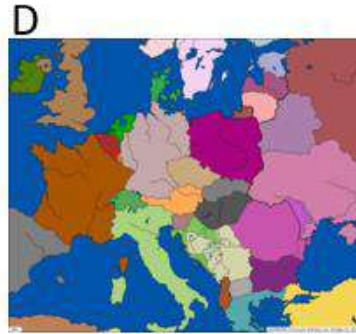
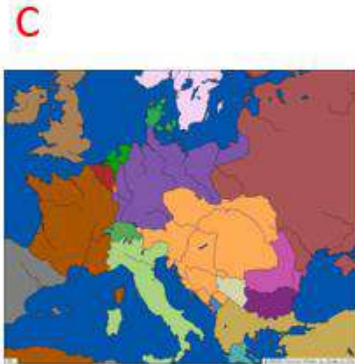
Word Bank	
Algeria	
Argentina	
Australia	
Brazil	
Canada	
China	
Great Britain	
United States	
India	
Italy	
Russia	
Saudi Arabia	
South Africa	

What is this item assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

What's the construct?-6

What is this item assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

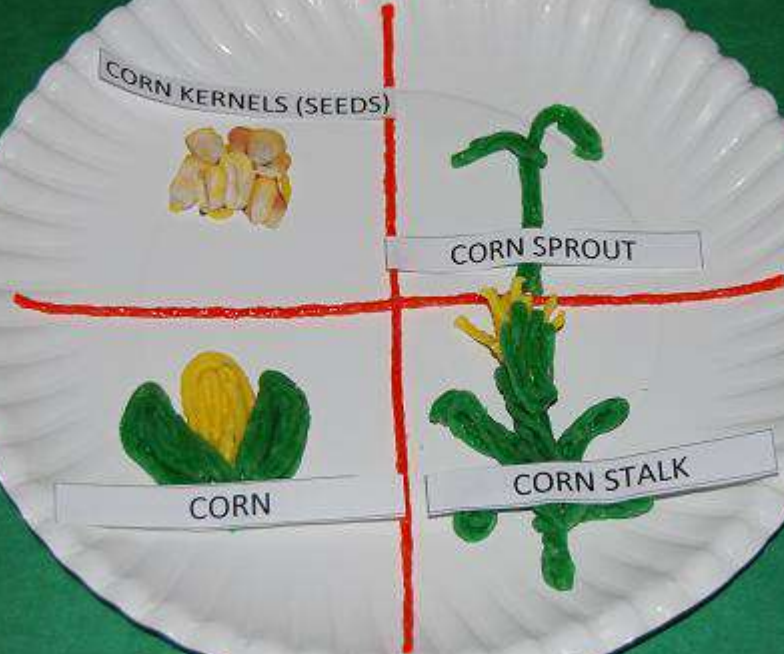
Which map represents the situation in August, 1914?



Consider the following map task in a history class at a US university.

What's the construct?-7

CORN LIFE CYCLE



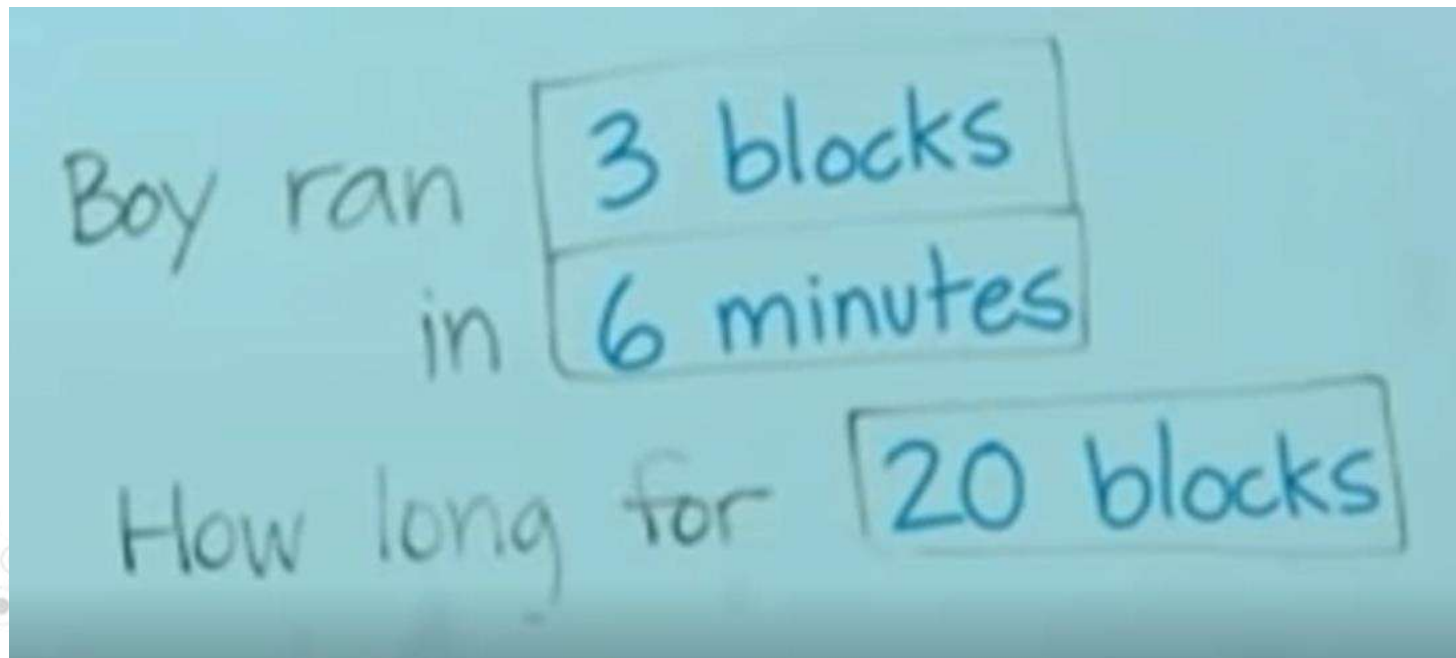
What is this task assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

Consider the following response given by a young learner (6-9 year old) in a primary school science class.

What's the construct?-8

Consider the following situation in a primary school mathematics class.

What is this task assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box



What's the construct?-9

Consider the following item in a class on the history of the economy at a US university.

“Barbarians have no rights as a nation, except a right to such treatment as may, at the earliest possible period, fit them for becoming one.”

This quotation exemplifies the main argument of which text?

- A. Thomas Mun, *England's Treasure by Foreign Trade* (1664).
- B. John Stuart Mill, “A Few Words on Non-Intervention,” *Fraser's Magazine* (December, 1859).
- C. John Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (James Nisbet, 1902).
- D. Vladimir Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917).
- E. Joseph Schumpeter, *The Sociology of Imperialism* (1919).

What is this item assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

What's the construct?-10

Occupational English Test

WRITING SUB-TEST: **PODIATRY**

TIME ALLOWED: **READING TIME: 5 MINUTES**

WRITING TIME: 40 MINUTES

Consider the following writing prompt on the Occupational English Test for podiatrists.

What is this item assessing given the context? Write your response in the Chat box.

Notes:

Assume that today's date is 04 September 2018

You are attending to a dancer's toe nails after a number of recurring attempts to resolve an ingrown toe nail.

PATIENT DETAILS:

Clinic: Podiatry Clinic

Name: Jennifer Dupont

Marital status: Single

Residence: 14 Powell Drive, Newtown

Date of Birth: Jan 10, 1998

Examination date:
Sep 4, 2018

Diagnosis: Appendicectomy 2006

Past medical history:

Appendicectomy 2006
Father - ingrown toe nail problems for yrs
Ingrown toe nail – treated with success 2013
L sore - not ingrown 2014
Infected R toe given antibiotic powder 2015
R toe nail still sore, purulent discharge – resting from dance 2016
Toe been good for more than 1 yr

Social background:

Migrated France -> Australia 2007 with parents
Elite dancer. Lives at home with parents between travelling on dance tours

Presenting complaint:

Chronic infected R hallux for 5 yrs. Attended many times & treated with betadine antiseptic liquid and oral antibiotics

Treatment record

01 Aug 2017 Presented for routine nail treatment
Involved nail shape, poor cutting technique (forward arrow) recurring problems
Strong recommendation for podiatrist - led nail care

06 Dec 2017 L / hallux - good. Hypergranulation of R /hallux - no evidence of infection
Cut own toe nails in a hurry before a dance recently. Superficial skin damage ~8mm to R/1
Busy schedule over next month - cannot rest

04 Sep 2018

On examination:

R/1 Extremely painful, red, inflamed with green exudate
Daily soaks in Epsom salts and dressings
by district nurse /family member with Betadine and Mefix / Hypafix (non-absorba)

Currently resting. Dr review on tour → oral antibiotics cephalexin (Keflex) (1rpt)

R/1 treated, nail spike removed and dressing applied
Wants recurring problem resolved
Discussed options including partial nail avulsion with phenolisation, though not during infective stage → antibiotics first. Explained healing post procedure - need plenty of time off from dancing (2-3 weeks)
To attend clinic once/week

For referral to local Dr for antibiotics

Writing Task:

Using the information given in the case notes, write a letter of referral to a local doctor, Dr Ray Brooks, 3 Brougham Road, Lakeside to outline your treatment plan for Jennifer.

In your answer:

- Expand the relevant notes into complete sentences
- Do **not** use note form
- Use letter format

The body of the letter should be approximately 180–200 words.

Assessment of the Occupational English Test

How is writing ability assessed in OET?

Your performance on the Writing sub-test is marked independently by a minimum of two trained Assessors. Neither Assessor knows what scores the other has given you, or what scores you have achieved in any of the other sub-tests.

Your performance is scored against six criteria and receives a band score for each criterion:

- Purpose (Whether the purpose of the letter is immediately apparent to the reader and sufficiently expanded in the course of the letter)
- Content (Whether all the necessary information is included and accurate for the reader)
- Conciseness & Clarity (Whether unnecessary information is omitted so that the letter is an effective summary for the reader)
- Genre & Style (Whether the register, tone and use of abbreviations are appropriate for the reader)
- Organisation & Layout (Whether the letter is organised and well laid out for the reader)
- Language (Whether the accuracy of the grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation communicates the necessary information to the reader)

For the Writing sub-test, each Assessor scores your performance according to six criteria: **Purpose, Content, Conciseness & Clarity, Genre & Style, Organisation & Layout, and Language.** Each criterion is assigned a band score from 0 to 7, except Purpose, which has a band score of 0 to 3. A score of 350 (previously grade B) for Writing requires a high level of performance on all six criteria.

A business course in an EMI setting

Instructions

Please comment, both on the teacher's two statements about small businesses in Russia and on franchising, and on at least three student entries.

a. Level of understanding criteria: your posts should demonstrate that

- i. You have read both the articles that were discussed in class and that you understood them
- ii. Have not merely repeated the content of the articles but that you have worked with this material, analysing and interpreting it.

b. Content criteria: your posts should demonstrate

- i. Critical thinking
- ii. Originality
- iii. Ability to develop an argument
- iv. Ability to provide evidence to support your conclusions
- v. Ability to integrate and evaluate information and data from a variety of sources.

c. Language criteria: your language should:

- i. Express the content as it is described in the content guidelines
- ii. Be discipline-specific, i.e. it should demonstrate knowledge of the vocabulary, specific to the topics discussed
- iii. Demonstrate coherence and cohesion to convey meaning and construct content
- iv. Be grammatically correct to be able to construct content.

Helly, O. (2019)

Alberta K–12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks With Examples

Grades 10–12

5 proficiency levels and 7 evaluation criteria

- ⊙ Linguistics: vocabulary
- ⊙ Linguistic: syntax
- ⊙ Strategic: decoding
- ⊙ Strategic: comprehension
- ⊙ Socio-Linguistic
- ⊙ Discourse
- ⊙ Fluency



STRATEGIES TO EXPLAIN A NEW CONCEPT

	LINKING TO PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE	ADAPTING LANGUAGE	BREAKING DOWN COMPLICATED INFORMATION
C2	Can introduce complex concepts (e.g. scientific notions) by providing extended definitions and explanations which draw upon assumed previous knowledge.	Can adapt the language of a very wide range of texts in order to present the main content in a register and degree of sophistication and detail appropriate to the audience concerned.	Can facilitate understanding of a complex issue by explaining the relationship of parts to the whole and encourage different ways of approaching it.
C1	Can spontaneously pose a series of questions to encourage people to think about their prior knowledge of an abstract issue and to help them establish a link to what is going to be explained.	<p>Can explain technical terminology and difficult concepts when communicating with non-experts about matters within his/her field of specialisation.</p> <p>Can adapt his/her language (e.g. syntax, idiomaticity, jargon) in order to make a complex specialist topic accessible to recipients who are not familiar with it.</p> <p>Can paraphrase and interpret complex, technical texts, using suitably non-technical language for a listener who does not have specialist knowledge.</p>	Can facilitate understanding of a complex issue by highlighting and categorising the main points, presenting them in a logically connected pattern and reinforcing the message by repeating the key aspects in different ways.



CEFR for Young Learners

7-10

Levels B2 / B2+		
CEFR Descriptor (2017 Extended Set)	Relevance for adaptation to ages 7-10	Accredited / registered ELP can-do statements ages 7-10
Can communicate the essential points in a straightforward way even in more demanding situations.	Partially relevant: e.g. on topics related to school subjects or hobbies.	I can summarise lengthy texts in such a way that people listening to me clearly understand the most essential parts, and I can state individual aspects more precisely. [2012.R007-TUR/6-12]
SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Putting a Case (e.g. in a debate)		SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Putting a Case (e.g. in a debate)
B2		B2
Can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	Partially relevant: could work towards this with age appropriate tasks, at the higher end of the age group.	I can present my point of view on a current topic or problem, and support it with suitable examples. [2012.R007-TUR/6-12]

11-15

Levels B2 / B2+		
CEFR Descriptor (2017 Extended Set)	Relevance for adaptation to ages 11-15	Accredited / registered ELP can-do statements ages 11-15
		I can speculate about causes, consequences and hypothetical situations. [10.2001-IE/Auth] – ND I can give clear, detailed descriptions on numerous themes relating to fields which interest me. [LINGUAL-CH/13-15] I can talk for a relatively long time on familiar subjects (for example music and bands); I can describe and compare some of the aspects in detail. [LINGUAL-CH/13-15]
Can describe the personal significance of events and experiences in detail.	Partially relevant: if subject matter is familiar.	I can give a detailed account of my own experiences, describe emotions that I have felt and the way I have reacted. [LINGUAL-CH/13-15]
SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Giving information		SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Giving information
B2+		B2+
Can communicate complex information and advice on the full range of matters related to his/her occupational role.	Partially relevant: e.g. on topics related to school subjects or hobbies.	

Student Age: 15/16 Subject: History

My goals for speaking

		I can do this...			
My objectives:	I cannot manage this yet	with help from classmates or teachers	well	very well	I have evidence
• What I can do • What I will work on					
	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date

Express opinions, discuss

B2: I can talk about historical topics and share information, ideas and my attitudes about the topic					
B2: I can give my opinion and explain it					
B2: I can explain why I am for or against something					

YL self-assessment

Moe E., Härmälä M.,
Kristmanson P. L., Pascoal J.,
Ramoniené M. (2015)

Alberta K–12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks With Examples

Grades 10–12

Reading: Fluency

Reading

Grades 10–12

Level 1 Beginning	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Expanding	Level 4 Bridging	Level 5 Extending
Fluency (ability to read aloud smoothly, accurately and with appropriate expression)				
Reads: <ul style="list-style-type: none">word-by-wordwith some phrasing.	Reads with some: <ul style="list-style-type: none">phrasingrereadingsounding out of wordspausing to refer to visualssubstitution of unknown words with familiar words.	Reads increasingly with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">expressionattention to common punctuationmeaningful word substitutions.	Reads consistently with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">expressionattention to most punctuationself-correction, as required.	Reads fluently with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">expressionappropriate intonationattention to all punctuationself-correction, as required.

Alberta K–12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks With Examples

Grades 10–12

Reading (continued)

Level 1 Beginning	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Expanding	Level 4 Bridging	Level 5 Extending
Strategic: Comprehension (ability to apply techniques and tools to construct meaning)				
<p>Relies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pictures • familiar phrases • patterned sentences • context • shared experiences • first language and culture to comprehend simple texts on familiar topics. 	<p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rereading • reading on • contextual cues • root-word recognition to comprehend texts on familiar topics. 	<p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • predicting • inferencing • contextual cues • affix analysis to understand texts on unfamiliar topics. 	<p>Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • synthesizing • summarizing • drawing conclusions • contextual cues • word analysis to understand a variety of texts on unfamiliar topics. 	<p>Interprets and applies textual information to new situations.</p>
<p>Student uses strategies, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relying on diagrams, charts and visuals to understand new words • looking for known phrases and sentence patterns to determine meaning of unknown words • using context of classroom discussions to figure out meaning • using prior knowledge and experience to make meaning • looking for similarities in words in other known languages. 	<p>Student increases comprehension through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rereading words, phrases or sentences carefully to understand new words • reading past unknown parts to see if the explanation or cues are available later in the text • using the context of the situation or event in the reading to determine meaning and make connections about new words • looking for known words within new words to determine meaning. 	<p>Student increases comprehension through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • predicting meaning based on experience, prior knowledge or context • inferring or drawing conclusions based on what has been read • using cues, such as embedded definitions, synonyms, format cues, boldface, glossary, punctuation to determine meaning • using knowledge of prefixes and suffixes to determine meaning of new words. 	<p>Student increases comprehension through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • synthesizing (pulling together relevant and significant information from text) • summarizing (reducing overall information into most important points or findings) • drawing conclusions (evaluating all information and determining the purpose of the text) • analyzing words (looking at the root word, affixes and other forms of the words to understand the meaning of words). 	<p>Student reads a variety of texts and uses information to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct research • design a multimedia presentation • write an essay • write a journal entry • write a persuasive essay • draft a position paper.

Example: functional formative content assessment of beginners

First, having posed the experimental question of whether the ring magnets had north and south poles, she demonstrated repelling and attracting to guide the learners to describe the unfamiliar case:

Teacher: So... what happened here?

Students: It repelled.

Teacher: They're repelling. Right. They were repelling and I'm going to turn this one over.

What do we call this? North or south?

Students: North.

Teacher: North. It doesn't matter. I'm turning it over. What...

Student: Attract.

[Having got the students to label one pole hypothetically, the teacher next asked for a semantic inference about the 'attract' situation and then for their reasons for it.]

Teacher: SO IF it's attracting what is underneath here? North or south?

Students: South.

Teacher: South. Right. The bottom is probably north and this part is south. ... WHY?

BECAUSE?

Student: BECAUSE north and south.

Teacher: BECAUSE north and south and what do north and south always do? What is the rule?

Students: Attracts.

Teacher: That's right. North and south always attract. What repels?

Student: North and north or south and south.

Accommodation vs. Modification

“

testing accommodations:

changes in the assessment environment or process that do not fundamentally alter what the assessment measures

(e.g., presentation of test materials, students' responses to test items, scheduling, and test setting)

testing modifications:

changes in the assessment environment or process that may fundamentally alter what the assessment measures

(e.g., cognitively less demanding version)

Educational Testing Service (2009)

Best practices and considerations -1

- Know the construct to be assessed.
- Construct may be language, content, or both – recognize limitations of artificial separation of the two.
- Verify that nothing irrelevant to the intended construct is (also) being assessed.
- Examine evaluation criteria/rating scale/rubric for construct irrelevance.
- Are responses in L1 accepted if content is being evaluated?
- Does assessment in L1 change the construct?
- Does weighting items disadvantage NNSs?
- Train all instructors and assessors in how to use the rating scale.

Best practices and considerations -2

- If both language and content are to be assessed, separate the evaluation criteria into separate rubrics or use an analytic rating scale.
- Write clear directions/instructions. Ensure learners/test takers understand them fully.
- For beginners, simplify input; accept modified output; provide sentence frames, graphic organizers, word bank/wall, visuals
- Align course goals, content, methods, materials, assessments: if preparing learners for real-life performance, use authentic alternative assessments (portfolio, self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, checklists, oral reports, observations, scenario-based performances).
- Take pictures of students working and have them explain what they were doing.

Best practices and considerations -2

- Plan backwards: design course with end result in mind.
- Lessons should be guided by separate content and language objectives.
- Formative, informal, low-stakes assessment should be frequent.
- Summative, formal, higher stakes should be infrequent.
- Summative, formal, higher stakes should be infrequent.
- When possible or necessary, try out (pilot test/field test) new items, tasks, instructions, rubrics for both language and content.

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A decorative background featuring a network diagram with nodes and connecting lines, primarily visible on the left and bottom right sides of the slide.

Thank you for attending

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Construct definition

Example composition construct definition A

Composition ability means expressing oneself clearly, coherently in writing on a particular topic.

Example composition construct definition B

Composition ability for academic purposes means writing an argumentative essay on a particular topic in the following way: clear, coherent, grammatically and lexically correct, as well as mechanically accurate

