

# Effective Assessment Practices in the English Language Curriculum

## Teaching and Assessing Reading and Writing

March & April 2022

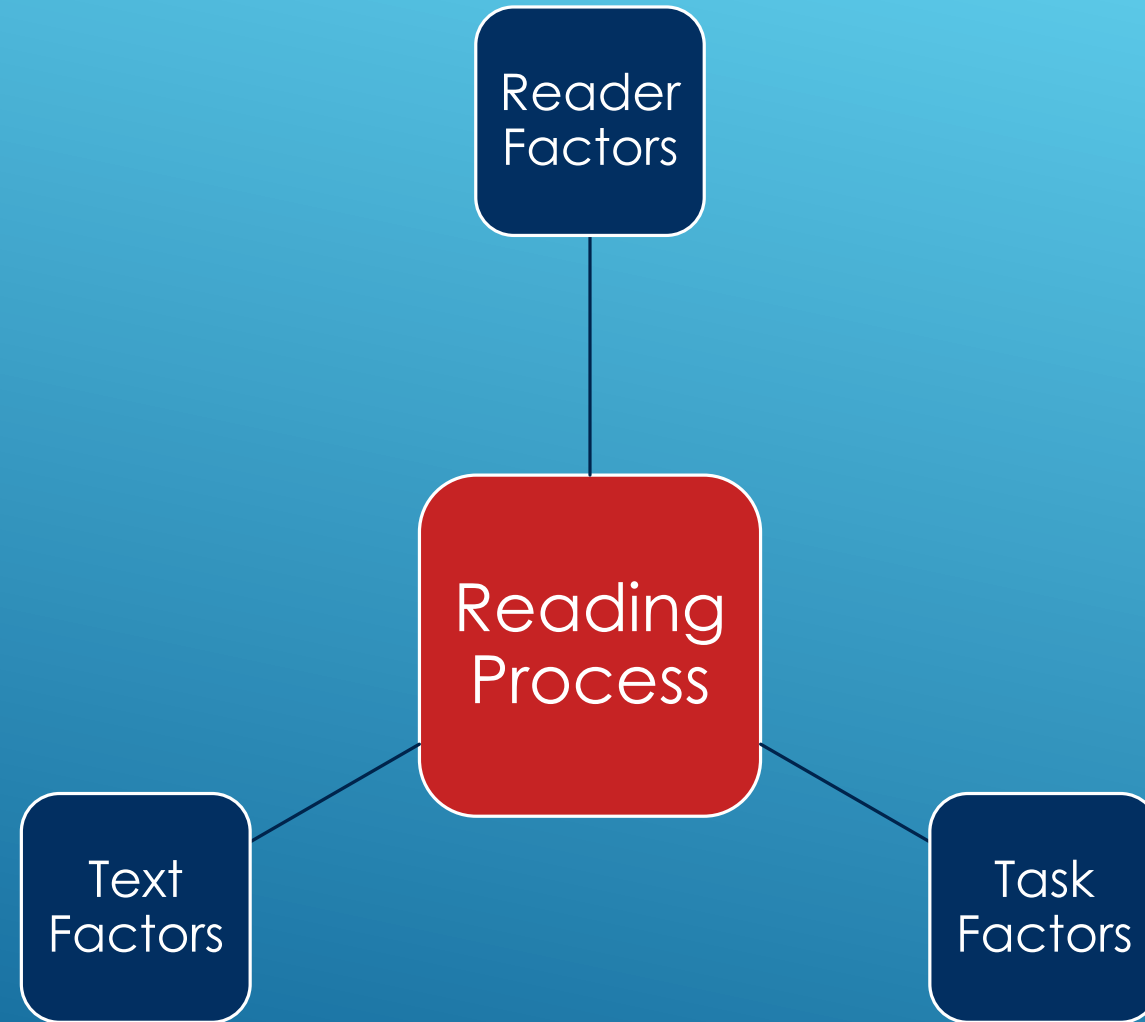
# What is the role of assessment?

## Extending from AfL to AaL -- Empowering students to monitor & evaluate own progress

Summative	AoL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>describes the level students have attained</li><li>shows what they know/can do over a period of time</li><li>gives an overview of previous learning for <b>reporting/selection</b> purposes</li></ul>
Formative	AfL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>integrates assessment into learning &amp; teaching</li><li>helps <u>students</u> understand what they are learning, what they have attained, what is expected of them</li><li>helps <u>teachers</u> collect learning evidence to provide timely feedback &amp; refine teaching strategies</li></ul>
	AaL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>engages <u>students</u> in reflecting on &amp; monitoring their progress of learning</li><li>involves <u>students</u> in regulating the learning process, evaluating their own performance against the learning goals &amp; planning for the next step in learning</li></ul>

**What makes reading difficult?**

# Factors Affecting the Reading Process



## Textual Characteristics

- ◆ Passage length
- ◆ Density of information
  - Elaboration or use of examples
- ◆ Passage format
  - Expository or narrative
- ◆ Organisational structure or coherence
  - Headings, diagrams, etc.
- ◆ Writing style
- ◆ Familiarity of the topic
- ◆ Background knowledge required of the reader
- ◆ Grammatical complexity
- ◆ Word choices

## Different Types of Questions

- ◆ MC Questions
- ◆ T/F/Not Given
- ◆ Matching
- ◆ Labelling
- ◆ Sequencing
- ◆ Gap-filling
- ◆ Short Answers
- ◆ Summary Cloze
- ◆ Proof-reading
- ◆ Summary Writing

## Factors Affecting the Difficulty of Question Items

- ◆ Question types
- ◆ Phrasing of the questions

# Unpacking Formative Assessment

**Where Am I  
Now?**

**How Can I  
Close the Gap?**

**Where Am I  
Going?**

**How can we describe students'  
reading performance?**



# How to Describe Students' Reading Performance

Lily, you did a lot better this time!  
Keep it up!

Jack, you got an 'A' in this Reading  
Test! Well done!

Steve, I think you need to work  
much harder! If you fail again, ...

# Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors for English Language (Reading) at the End of KS3

## HKDSE Level Descriptors (Reading)

Reading	
BC Descriptors	Examples (The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)
Using an increasing range of reading strategies to understand the meaning* of texts* <sup>(1)</sup> with some degree of complexity (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using knowledge of the world</li> <li>• identifying the main theme/focus</li> <li>• identifying general and specific information</li> <li>• using linguistic and contextual clues</li> <li>• using knowledge of features of different text-types</li> <li>• working out the meaning of unknown words and expressions</li> <li>• understanding the structure of texts</li> <li>• distinguishing between different types of texts</li> <li>• skimming</li> <li>• sequencing</li> <li>• identifying main points</li> <li>• identifying key words</li> <li>• making predictions</li> <li>• predicting content</li> <li>• understanding the functions of basic punctuation</li> <li>• identifying a range of cohesive devices</li> <li>• recognizing key words in a sentence</li> <li>• predicting content using the book cover, picture cues, prior knowledge and personal experience</li> <li>• recognizing formulaic or common expressions</li> <li>• recognizing repetitive language patterns</li> <li>• understanding the functions of basic punctuation</li> </ul>
Extracting and organizing information and ideas from texts* <sup>(1)</sup> with some degree of complexity (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analyzing and integrating relevant points from one or more than one text</li> <li>• note taking</li> <li>• summarizing</li> <li>• paraphrasing</li> <li>• mind maps</li> <li>• diagrams</li> <li>• spidergrams</li> <li>• sketches</li> </ul>

HONG KONG DIPLOMA OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATION	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE	
LEVEL DESCRIPTORS	
Reading Descriptors	
<b>Level 5</b>	
<b>General comprehension</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main theme and subthemes or focuses of complex texts are identified with less familiar topics.</li> </ul>	and alternative views are followed, and the reasons are
	including those based on an texts are understood.
	is given, including a context and figurative language.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tone and mood are interpreted in all texts.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	
<b>General comprehension</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main theme or ideas of fairly complex texts are identified.</li> <li>• Views and attitudes are identified, and the development of an argument followed.</li> </ul>	
<b>Specific comprehension</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obvious inferences are made in fairly complex texts. More sophisticated inferences are made if the text is simple and the topic is familiar.</li> <li>• The meaning of words and phrases is identified when a context is given by one or more sentences or a paragraph in fairly complex texts.</li> </ul>	
<b>Awareness of style</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tone and mood are interpreted in fairly complex texts.</li> </ul>	

# Summative



The Learning Progression Framework for  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE (READING SKILLS)

Reading - ATM 1	Reading – ATM 2	Reading – ATM 3	Reading – ATM 4	Reading – ATM 5	Reading – ATM 6	Reading – ATM 7	Reading – ATM 8
Understanding information and ideas in some short simple texts, using some reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding information, ideas and feelings in a small range of short simple texts, using some reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a small range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a small range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding, inferring and interpreting information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding, inferring and interpreting information, ideas, feelings and opinions in complex texts, using and integrating a range of reading strategies as appropriate

# Formative

1. Language development strategies are integrated into the learning and teaching process.
2. Learners are exposed to a variety of texts and tasks.
3. Selection of a wide range of texts of appropriate lengths and different topics, including authentic texts, is crucial to the development of reading skills and strategies (e.g. scanning for specific information, skimming for gist, using contextual clues) as well as learners' awareness of different cultures.
4. The interplay between tasks and texts is a factor for consideration when teachers design a range of tasks for learners to demonstrate their understanding of the texts. In principle, task demand increases with text complexity as learners progress in the development of reading skills and strategies. To cater for learner diversity, simple tasks can be included for complex texts to cultivate learners' confidence, and difficult tasks for simple texts to stretch their abilities.
5. Teacher support is essential to helping learners understand the text and demonstrate their understanding during the learning and teaching process. Teachers are also expected to help learners activate their prior knowledge and experiences in the process of interacting with the text. As learners progress, the amount of support provided is gradually reduced to promote learner independence.

<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/cla/eng-edu/references-resources/LPF/LPFenglish.html>





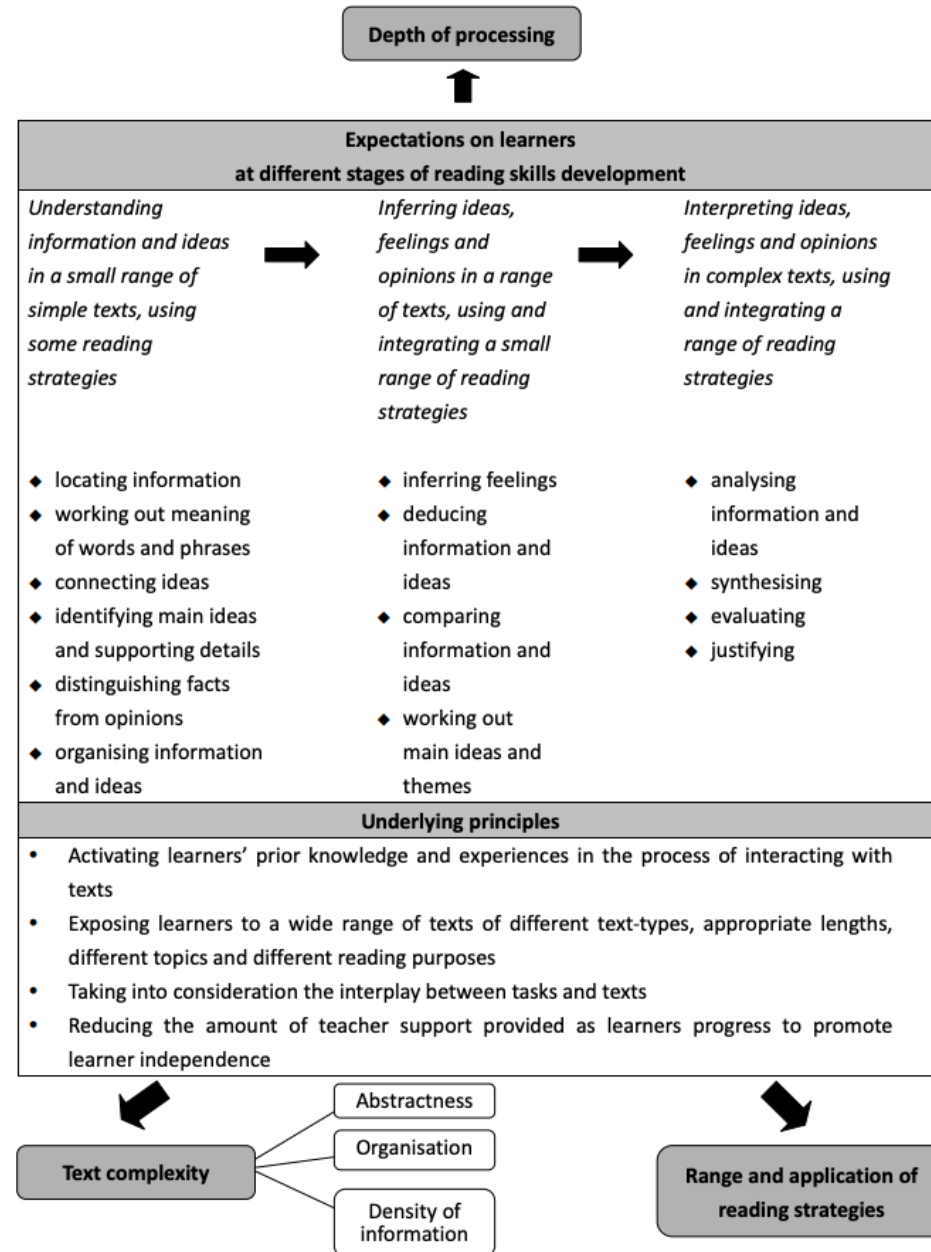
Reading - ATM 1	Reading – ATM 2	Reading – ATM 3	Reading – ATM 4	Reading – ATM 5	Reading – ATM 6	Reading – ATM 7	Reading – ATM 8
Understanding information and ideas in some short simple texts, using some reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding information, ideas and feelings in a small range of short simple texts, using some reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a small range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a small range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding, inferring and interpreting information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a range of reading strategies as appropriate	Understanding, inferring and interpreting information, ideas, feelings and opinions in complex texts, using and integrating a range of reading strategies as appropriate
Pointers <i>Learners can, for example,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognise some high frequency words (e.g. the, you)</li> <li>decode words by using knowledge of letter-sound relationships</li> <li>process simple sentences by using knowledge of basic conventions of written English (e.g. basic punctuation)</li> <li>follow predictable texts by recognising the repeated use of sentence patterns</li> <li>follow instructions and signs by recognising key words with visual support</li> <li>master basic book concepts (e.g. titles and names of authors)</li> <li>locate specific information by recognising simple formats (e.g. birthday or invitation cards)</li> </ul>	Pointers <i>Learners can, for example,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work out the meaning of words by using knowledge of letter-sound relationships</li> <li>recognise common contracted forms by connecting them to their full forms</li> <li>process simple sentences by identifying meaningful chunks</li> <li>locate specific information by identifying key words</li> <li>follow ideas by understanding the use of simple cohesive devices (e.g. simple connectives, pronouns)</li> <li>identify characters, setting and sequence of events in stories</li> <li>make predictions about the content from the titles, illustrations or contents page</li> </ul>	Pointers <i>Learners can, for example,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work out the meaning of words and phrases by using knowledge of word formation (e.g. prefix, suffix) and some semantic clues (e.g. synonyms)</li> <li>process some compound and complex sentences</li> <li>locate specific information by recognising simple text structures (e.g. list of ingredients followed by cooking procedures in recipes)</li> <li>identify main ideas and some supporting details explicitly stated in the text</li> <li>make predictions about the likely development of the text by identifying key words</li> <li>infer information, ideas and feelings by using clues in close proximity</li> <li>identify simple stylistic features (e.g. personification)</li> </ul>	Pointers <i>Learners can, for example,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work out the meaning of words and phrases by using semantic and syntactic clues</li> <li>locate details which support the main ideas from different parts of a text</li> <li>follow ideas by recognising simple text structures and understanding the use of cohesive devices</li> <li>infer feelings of characters from pieces of information in narrative texts</li> <li>deduce information and ideas by using semantic and syntactic clues</li> </ul>	Pointers <i>Learners can, for example,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work out the meaning of some idiomatic expressions (e.g. phrasal verbs and idioms) by using semantic and syntactic clues</li> <li>follow the development of main ideas and make connections between ideas and information not explicitly stated by using semantic and syntactic clues</li> <li>organise information and ideas in texts by using knowledge of text structures and some graphic forms (e.g. mind maps, character webs)</li> <li>distinguish facts from opinions by using semantic and syntactic clues</li> <li>identify the stylistic features in texts (e.g. flashback in narrative texts)</li> </ul>	Pointers <i>Learners can, for example,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work out the literal and implied meaning of words and expressions by using semantic and syntactic clues</li> <li>gather, distil and summarise more extensive information and ideas from texts</li> <li>compare alternative views and arguments in texts by using graphic forms and making notes (e.g. drawing tables with appropriate headings, using point form, and own shorthand and symbols)</li> <li>deduce themes based on information and ideas from texts</li> <li>identify writers' attitudes clearly signalled in texts</li> </ul>	Pointers <i>Learners can, for example,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work out the meaning of figurative language (e.g. metaphors) by using semantic and syntactic clues</li> <li>analyse the development of ideas, views or arguments in texts</li> <li>interpret ideas and opinions presented in different texts and draw conclusions</li> <li>analyse texts for themes, intended audience and writers' attitudes by reviewing</li> <li>understand the use of stylistic features in texts (e.g. the use of rhetorical questions and hyperboles in speeches for emphatic purposes)</li> </ul>	Pointers <i>Learners can, for example,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>justify interpretations of writers' intention by using well-chosen evidence from texts</li> <li>synthesise ideas and opinions presented in different texts and draw conclusions</li> <li>analyse texts for themes, intended audience and writers' attitudes by understanding their social and cultural implications</li> <li>analyse the use of different text types in presenting a message</li> <li>appreciate the rhetoric of texts by understanding the use of stylistic features in texts and the effects achieved</li> </ul>

**NB**

The reading strategies included in some of the pointers provide examples on how these strategies can help learners construct meaning and interpret texts. They are by no means exhaustive or prescriptive. They serve as reference for teachers in planning and developing tasks for the learning-teaching-assessment cycle.

## Overview of the growth of learners on a **developmental continuum** as they become effective readers

- To better articulate in learning objectives and question intents the reading skills expected of students
- To help students understand their current performance and how they could be guided to progress further



(P.3 of the PDF file is relevant)

# Closing the Gap – Designing Reading Activities

Base on what we have come across in the first part of the workshop, how can teachers help students bridge the gap or advance?

- Identifying students' strengths and weaknesses: **where they are**

Possible resource: Learning Progress Framework (LPF)

- Setting learning goals: **where they are going**

Share the learning intentions with students to help students focus

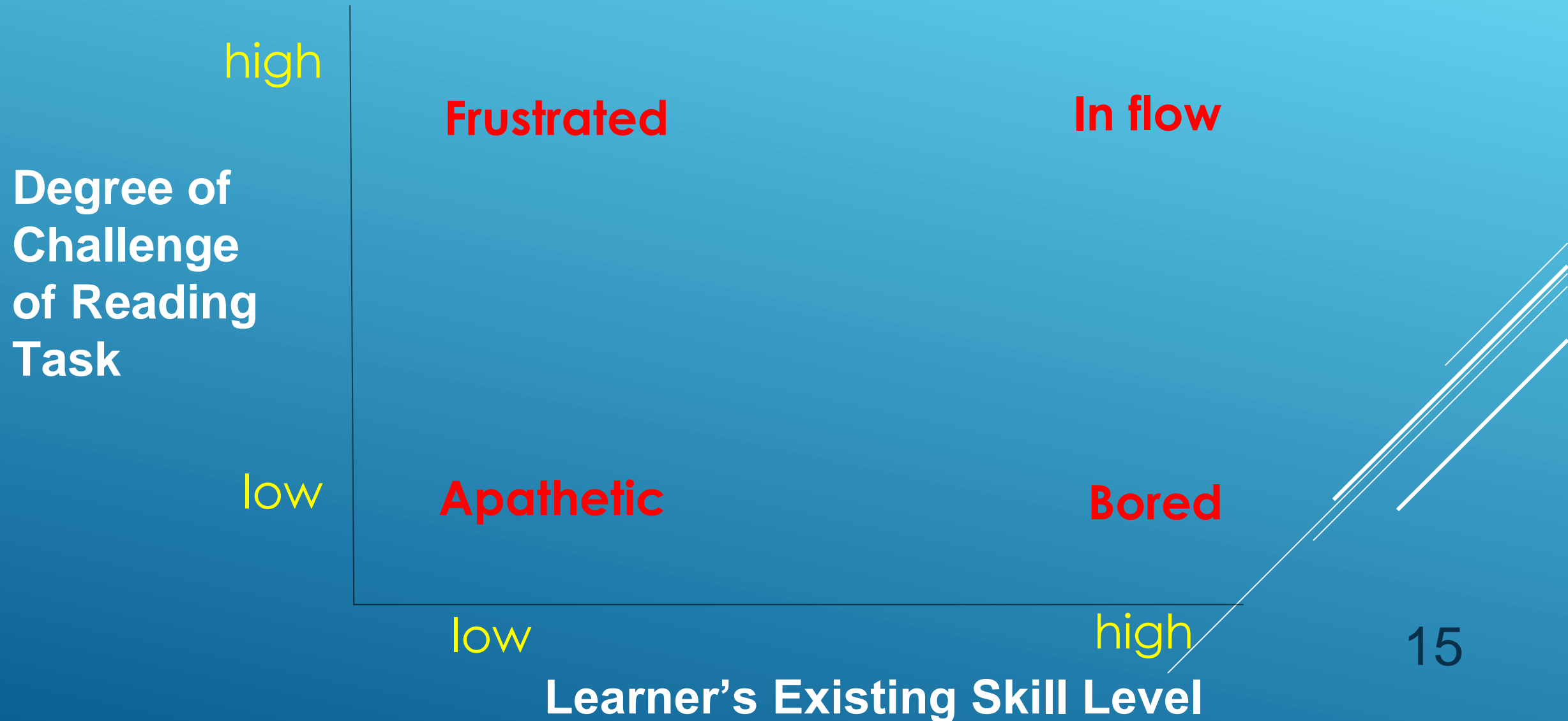
- Selecting/designing learning activities to facilitate learning:

**How to get there**

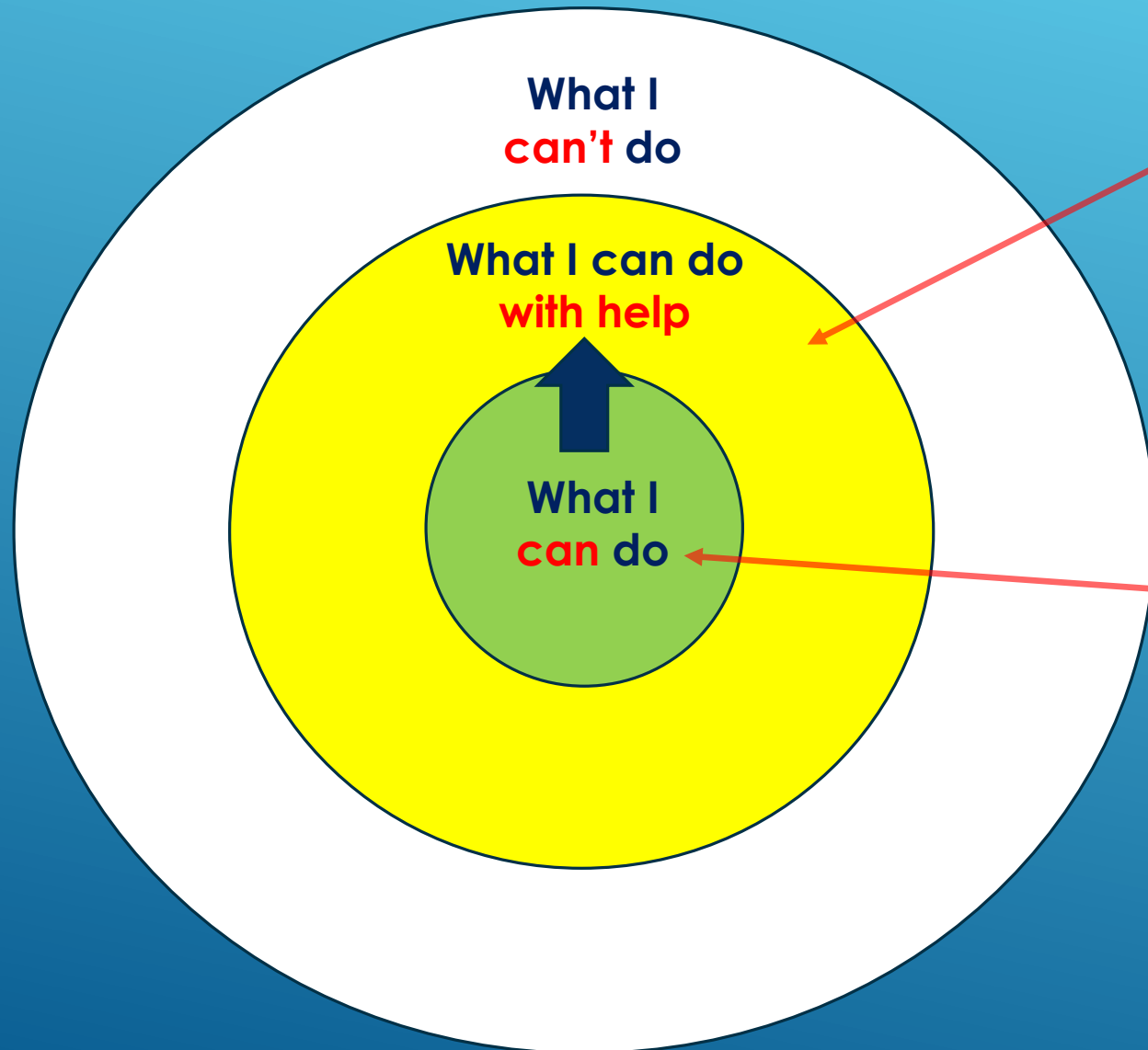
Setting appropriate questions, ensuring a balanced coverage of question types and question intents to consolidate students' reading skills and strategies



# Motivation - an Interplay of Challenge and Skill



# Assessment that Scaffolds Learning



**Zone of Proximal Development – ZPD**  
What needs to be done to take the learner where he needs to be

**Zone of Achieved Development – ZAD**  
Where the learner is right now



# Practice on Synthesising Ideas and Paraphrasing Skills

I got 30 marks for the English test last time.

I got 80 marks for the English test this time.

I could only run 1km before I started training for running.

After training for 6 months, I could finish a half-marathon in 3 hours.

My teacher is happy with my improvement / achievement / progress.

✗ My teacher is happy with my from 30 marks to 80 marks.

I am satisfied with my improvement / achievement / progress.

✗ I am satisfied with my from only 1km to a half-marathon in 3 hours.

# AaL in the Language Classroom

The AaL process can be translated into a number of strategies:






- Establishing and identifying **learning goals** and **success criteria**
- Giving **descriptive, diagnostic feedback** that helps students understand their own strengths and weaknesses
- Empowering students as **learning resources for one another**
- Developing a sense of **ownership** in students so that they take charge of their own learning

# Self-assessment for Reading – Reflecting on Reading Strategies

Reading strategies	Often	Sometimes	Almost never	What I plan to do
I make predictions before reading.				
I ask questions when I am reading.				
I look for the main idea.				
I skip unimportant information.				
I guess the meaning of unfamiliar words.				
I think of the intention of the author.				
I relate my experience to what I read.				


# Online Resources – Online Question Bank

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## EDB Assessment Tasks Reference


[EDB Assessment Tasks Reference](#)

 英國語文教育  
English Language Education

Input Keyword  Search

Curriculum : English Language Education

Question Type :

Search Result - Sort 

Total 107 Assessment Item(s) / Task(s) | displaying Item / Task 1 - 10 1 2 3 4 5 6 Next >

Assessment Item(s) / Task(s) 1. ☐ Select

Curriculum: [English Language Education](#)  
[English Language Education > Key Stage 4 > Reading](#)

Question Type:	Reading Task	Level of Difficulty:	For average students
Contributor:	English Language Education Section	Date of upload/edit:	07/08/2020
Tags:	<a href="#">Alien Interview</a> , <a href="#">book review</a> , <a href="#">reading</a>		

**Assessment Item:**

Reading Task – Alien Interview

Task description

Students complete a range of questions after reading four short texts.

Assessment objective

To assess students' ability to understand the ideas and views, as well as the language used in the reading text

[Question-and-Answer Paper and Suggested Answers](#)



Source:  
<https://www.hkedcity.net/edbatr/eng/>

## Reading Task: Alice in Wonderland

### Task Description

You will complete a range of questions after reading the story 'Alice falls down a hole'.

Read the following text and answer all the questions that follow.

### Text

#### Alice falls down a hole

Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the river bank, and of having nothing to do. Once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?"

- 5 So she considered in her own mind (as well as she could, for the day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a necklace of flowers would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the flowers, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

- 10 There was nothing so very remarkable in that, nor did Alice think it so very unusual to hear the Rabbit say to itself, "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!" But when the Rabbit actually took a watch out of the pocket in its waistcoat, looked at it and then hurried on, Alice jumped to her feet, for she immediately realised that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat, or a watch to take out of it. Being very curious, she ran across the field after it and was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole, under the hedge. In another moment, down went Alice after it!

- 15 The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down what seemed to be a very deep hole indeed, for she had plenty of time to look about her. Down, down, down! Would the fall never come to an end? There was nothing else to do, so Alice soon began talking to herself. "Dinah will miss me very much to-night, I should think!" (Dinah was the cat.) "I hope they'll remember her saucer of milk at tea-time. Dinah, my dear, I wish you were down here with me!" Alice felt that she was dozing off, when suddenly, thump! thump! down she came upon a heap of sticks and dry leaves, and the fall was over.

- 25 Alice was not a bit hurt, and she jumped up in a moment. She looked up, but it was all dark overhead; in front of her was another long passage and the White Rabbit was still in sight, hurrying down it. There was not a moment to be lost. Away went Alice like the wind and was just in time to hear it say, as it turned a corner, "Oh, my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!" She was close behind it when she turned the corner, but the Rabbit was no longer to be seen.

She found herself in a long, low hall, which was lit up by a row of lamps hanging from the roof.

- 30 There were doors all around the hall, but they were all locked; and when Alice had been all the way down one side and up the other, trying every door, she walked sadly down the middle, wondering how she was ever to get out again.

- 35 Suddenly she came upon a little table, all made of solid glass. There was nothing on it but a tiny golden key, and Alice's first idea was that this might belong to one of the doors of the hall; but, either the locks were too large, or the key was too small, and anyway it would not open any of them. However, on the second time around, she came upon a low curtain she had not noticed before, and behind it was a little door about fifteen inches high. She tried the little golden key in the lock and, to her great delight, it fitted!

- 40 Alice opened the door and found that it led into a small passage, not much larger than a rat-hole; she knelt down and looked along the passage into the loveliest garden you ever saw. How she so very much wanted to get out of that dark hall and wander about among those beds of bright flowers and those cool fountains, but she could not even get her head through the doorway. "Oh," said Alice, "how I wish I could shut up like a telescope! I think I could, if I only knew how to begin."

- 45 Alice went back to the table, half hoping she might find another key on it, or perhaps, a book of rules for shutting people up like telescopes. This time she found a little bottle on it ("which certainly was not here before," said Alice), and tied around the neck of the bottle was a paper label, with the words "DRINK ME" beautifully printed on it in large letters.

- 50 "No, I'll look first," she said, "and see whether it's marked '*poison*' or not," for she had never forgotten that, if you drink from a bottle marked "poison," it is almost certain to make you ill, sooner or later. However, this bottle was *not* marked "poison," so Alice decided to taste it, and, finding it very nice (it had a sort of mixed flavor of cherry-tart, cream, pineapple, roast chicken, candy and hot buttered toast), she very soon finished it off.

- 55 "What a curious feeling!" said Alice; 'I must be shutting up like a telescope.' Indeed, she was now only ten inches high, and her face brightened up at the thought that she was now the right size for going through the little door into that lovely garden.

- 60 After a while, finding that nothing more happened, she decided on going into the garden at once. However, when she got to the door, she found she had forgotten the little golden key and when she went back to the table for it, she found she could not possibly reach it. She could see it quite plainly through the glass, and she tried her best to climb up one of the legs of the table, but it was too slippery. When she had tired herself out with trying, poor Alice sat down and cried.

Adapted from *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

(1,028 words)



1. What did Alice find strange about her sister's book? (1 mark)

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2. Complete the table below with the words or expressions used by the writer in paragraphs 1 and 2 that match the meanings given. (3 marks)

Word or expression used by the writer	Meaning
	bored
	looked
	thought

3. What surprised Alice about the White Rabbit? (1 mark)

---

4. To what or whom does the word "it" in the first column of the table below refer? (4 marks)

Word used by the writer	Word or phrase in the text it refers to
"it" (line 11)	
"it" (line 13)	
"it" (line 14)	
"it" (line 15)	

5. In paragraph 4, why did Alice fall? (1 mark)

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6. The words "thump! thump!" (lines 22-23) indicate that Alice has: (1 mark)

- A. reached the bottom of the hole  
B. hit against the sides of the hole  
C. fallen asleep  
D. found some sticks and dry leaves

A B C D  
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. Explain, in your own words, the phrase "Away went Alice like the wind" (line 26). (1 mark)

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8. Complete the following sentence in your own words. (2 marks)

Alice walked "sadly" (line 31) down the hall because all

and so she did not know \_\_\_\_\_.

## Reading Task: *Alice in Wonderland*

### Teacher's Notes

This is a less challenging reading task. Most, if not all, students will be familiar with the story of Alice in Wonderland. It is suggested that teachers consider leading into the task with activities that sensitise students to the content. Such activities might include, for example:

1. Students brainstorm and perhaps research (using the web and/or library resources) what they know of the Alice story and then discuss their ideas in small groups.
2. The teacher may choose to contextualise the story by either presenting students with some information about the author and how his experiences influenced his writing of the story, Lewis Carroll, or by getting students to find out about this online.

<u>Answer Keys</u>		<u>Question Intent</u>	<u>Suggestions for Teachers</u>
1.	the lack of pictures or conversations (1 mark)	<i>[extracting relevant information]</i>	<i>Teaching suggestion: this item presents the opportunity for discussion about how the notion of what a book is has changed with the advent of interactive multimedia technology and ebooks.</i>
2.	tired <u>of</u> (line 1) (1 mark) peeped (line 2) (1 mark) considered (line 5) (1 mark)	<i>[working out meaning of words]</i>  <i>[working out meaning of idiomatic expressions]</i>	<i>For item 1, "of" is necessary. Highlighting the different meanings of "tired" and "tired of", this item presents the opportunity to introduce/review phrasal verbs.</i>  <i>Teaching suggestion: the different words associated with seeing/looking could be reviewed/discussed.</i>

10.	she tried to open (all) the doors // the key didn't open any of the doors // the key was too small // the locks were too big (1 mark)	<i>[extracting relevant information]</i> <i>[making inference]</i>	
11.	A. F (1 mark) B. X(1 mark) C. X(1 mark)	<i>[extracting relevant information]</i> <i>[making inference]</i>	<i>Teaching suggestion: teachers could use this item to encourage students to imagine Alice's emotions before and after seeing the garden and use the opportunity to review the meanings of words such "sadness", disappointment", "desire/longing", "hope", and "happiness".</i>
12.	she was too big / tall // the door was too small (1 mark)	<i>[making inference]</i>	<i>Teaching suggestion: teachers could use this item to get students talking about times that they have felt frustrated or disappointed.</i>
13.	B. (1 mark)	<i>[making inference]</i>	<i>Students either need to understand the word "telescope" or infer what Alice wants from the context (i.e. she "could not even get her head through the doorway" in line 38).</i>