

Assessment of extensive reading

- Our **aim** in extensive reading is to develop reading skills and good reading habits.
- Therefore, our assessment should focus on **reading behaviour** and use of reading strategies rather than the content of books which have been read.
- Reading behaviour can be assessed on a five point scale, such as the scale below. This is quick and easy.
- Learners should see the scale (in English or L1) so they can learn how to get a higher score.

5	Student reads comfortably in full paragraphs. Can usually guess next word in text. Copes with unknown words, using grammatical context, text context and variations of known words in English and other languages. Quickly completes most books and is eager to read more.
4	Student reads comfortably in full sentences. Can read sentences aloud with fluency and expression. Uses strategies to deduce meaning of unknown words from wider text context. Usually completes all books with a satisfying level of comprehension. Student enjoys reading even though s/he knows comprehension is not complete.
3	Student reads in full sentences and uses pictures to establish gist. At unknown words, uses sentence context to guess grammatical function. Uses pictures and wider text context to guess meaning. Usually completes all books started, but only reads when prompted.
2	Student usually reads phrases but not full sentences. Uses title and pictures to establish gist before reading. Sometimes stops reading at unknown words. Tries to guess meanings using phonics and pictures. Sometimes fails to complete books. Enjoys listening to books, but is reluctant to read without audio support.
1	Reads one word at a time. Does not prepare for reading by studying pictures. Panics and stops reading at unknown words. Does not use phonics, text or picture context to guess the word. Frequently abandons reading before completion, unless help is given. Dislikes reading lessons.

These assessment cards are clearly designed for students in the early stages of learning to read. Showing the assessment cards to students, either in English or translated into L1, allows students to see the type of behaviour required to achieve a higher grade.

*We can use this design to prepare assessment cards for more advanced reading levels in which students begin to **interpret** the text, and to cope with **non-linear** narrative texts which use **flashbacks** and similar devices. The same style of assessment cards can be produced for reading non-fiction scientific texts in which students should use their **background knowledge** in developing comprehension.*

Every two months, the teacher may use this five point scale to grade each student's reading behaviour.

The English Language Dossier

The *Dossier*, which is part of the English Language Portfolio, is a kind of scrapbook in which each student records his / her achievements in learning English is a good place for students to store their reading diary, a book review, personal response, summary or other materials developed from graded reading materials. The student may also comment on the recording of the book. If the book

has been presented as a film, a television programme, musical, or in some other medium, the student might comment on these, mentioning differences between the original book and the adaptation. These should be recorded with the title of the book, the grading level, the date started and the date completed.

In this way, the reading of each book (even those started and abandoned) is recorded as a learning achievement. Graded reading is a very important learning activity which reinforces structural fluency, develops vocabulary, builds confidence and adds to background knowledge.