

Diagnostic Assessment Tools in English – List of assessment tools

There are nine Early Literacy in English Tools. Table 1 outlines what skills are being assessed in these tools.

Table 1: Early Literacy in English Diagnostic Tools

Diagnostic Tool	Skill *	Beginning (well below Foundation level)	Progressing (towards Foundation level)	Progressing towards Victorian Curriculum Level 1
Alphabet letters	RLCL RUCL	Identify letters of own name	Name and give a sound for some upper and lower case letters	Name and give a sound for all upper and lower case letters
Comprehend Text	RC	Listen to <i>Ella and Luke</i> (book) and answer questions	Listen to <i>The Magic Pants</i> (book) and answer questions	Listen to <i>Crab and Fish</i> (book) and answer questions
Concepts of Print	CP P	Front of book Where is title Trace around a word/letter	Where does the story begin? Which way to go Name and purpose of full stop	Name and purpose of quotation marks & question marks
Listening and recall	CR	Repeat sequence of digits Repeat sentences Follow simple directions with common positional language	Repeat sequence of digits Repeat sentences Follow instructions to construct a figure	Repeat sequence of digits Repeat sentences
Phonemes	PA SW	No phonemes task at this level	Identify initial phoneme Identify same initial phoneme Identify final phoneme Blend phonemes	Segment words into phonemes Delete phonemes Substitute phonemes
Phonological Awareness	WS	Identify syllables in words Identify words that rhyme	Blend onset and rime Identify words that rhyme	Generate words that rhyme
Oral Language	OL:C OL:R	Name objects in a picture Describe actions in a picture	Use positional language to describe objects in a picture Describe clothing in a picture	Engage in conversation with the teacher with a picture prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extent of utterance - coherence - vocabulary - clarity

Table 1: Early Literacy in English Diagnostic Tools (continued)

Diagnostic Tool	Skill *	Beginning (well below Foundation level)	Progressing (towards Foundation level)	Progressing towards Victorian Curriculum Level 1
Reading	RA	Read environmental print	Listen to text and match words back to the text Identify common sight words in text	Read a story well supported by illustrations with a simple repetitive structure - fluency - accuracy Answer questions about the story
	RF			
	RC			
Early Writing	W	Distinguish writing from pictures and numbers Write own name Write other known words Orally dictate a sentence	Write high frequency words Write and read back own sentence	Spell some common words Write a dictated sentence Write and read back own sentence Build words with common spelling pattern
	S			
	WB			

* The second column of Table 1 shows the skills that are assessed in the Early Literacy in English Tools.

The abbreviations are listed below in the order in which they appear in the table:

RLCL: recognition of lower case alphabet letters	CR: comprehension of retell	RA: reading accuracy
RUCL: recognition of upper case alphabet letters	PA: phonemic awareness	RF: reading fluency
RC: reading comprehension	SW: segmenting words	W: writing
CP: concepts of print	WS: words and sounds	S: spelling
P: punctuation	OL:C: oral language conversation	WB: word building
	OL:R: oral language retell	

There are three Monitoring Progress Tools: Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening. Each tool has three levels: Victorian Curriculum Level 2, Victorian Curriculum Level 3 and Victorian Curriculum Level 4. The Victorian Curriculum Levels overlap in the Speaking and Listening Tools. Table 2 outlines the tools.

Table 2: Monitoring Progress Diagnostic Assessment Tools

Diagnostic Tool	Reading and Viewing Tools* – covering reading comprehension, accuracy and fluency skills.	Writing Tools** – covering writing and spelling skills.	Speaking and Listening*** – covering oral language retell, comprehension retell and oral language conversation.
Victorian Curriculum Level 4			
	Reading texts provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imaginative – narrative: <i>Aunt Jade on the Farm</i> • Argument: Indoor Basketball Court • Imaginative – narrative: <i>Finding Kit</i> • Information – diagram: <i>My X-Ray Image</i> • Information: Thomas Edison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report writing - Penguins • Persuasive writing - Shoes or Garden • Narrative writing – Trees or Shoes • Spelling list x 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening Presentation: Stick Insects • Listening Presentation: Museum • Pair Discussion: Cooked Lunches
Victorian Curriculum Level 3			
	Reading texts provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information: <i>Helicopters</i> • Argument: Year 4 Opinion Board • Information: <i>Hermit Crabs</i> • Imaginative – narrative: <i>The Invisible Dog</i> • Imaginative - poem: <i>Danni's Schoolbag</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report writing - Penguins • Persuasive writing - Shoes or Garden • Narrative writing – Trees or Shoes • Spelling list x 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Presentation: Museum • Listening Presentation: Fruit Bats • Pair Discussion: Cooked Lunches • Pair Discussion: Classroom Pet • Listening Presentation: Stick Insects
Victorian Curriculum Level 2			
	Reading texts provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imaginative - narrative – <i>A Storm is Coming</i> • Imaginative - narrative – <i>Lucky Duck Day</i> • Information – <i>Catbird</i> • Instruction – <i>Pebble Pet</i> • Information – <i>Westpark Zoo</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report - Shoes • Persuasive - Shoes or Garden • Narrative – Trees or Shoes • Spelling lists x 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening Presentation: Fruit Bats • Pair Discussion: Classroom Pet

*** Reading and Viewing Tools Overview**

The reading skills assessed by each text vary because different texts demand different interpretations: some texts invite ‘reading between the lines’ (inferences), in others the focus may be on the content, the form or the linking of details. It is important not to trivialise the meaning by trying to impose questions that don’t match the content of the text.

An effective assessment of reading comprehension focuses on the core meaning of the text and the interpretation of details or layers of meaning that expand and complement the core meaning. The questions cover as wide a range of relevant reading skills as possible. Each question addresses a

separate aspect of the text. The set of questions is designed to help teachers to find out if students have a deep and thorough understanding of the text.

All the texts have questions of a range of difficulty, regardless of the complexity of the text. There are usually only one or two literal questions about retrieving directly stated information per text as these would generally be too easy for the designated Victorian Curriculum Level.

**** Writing tool overview**

The writing tasks are assessed against content; organisation; sentence and paragraph structure; vocabulary; punctuation; and spelling.

Educators need to know how well students are able to write for different purposes. Knowing students' strengths guides teachers in selecting appropriately challenging writing tasks for students to work on independently. Identifying obvious patterns of weakness in the ideas students have about what to write, the way they organise their writing, the way they construct sentences and paragraphs, the vocabulary they use and their use of punctuation and spelling, also alerts teachers to areas where students need support to develop their skills. Detailed diagnostic information about the spelling words is included in the task booklet.

***** Speaking and Listening Overview**

The speaking and listening tasks are administered as digital texts. This ensures that all students have the same opportunities to recall and respond to the texts and that their responses are comparable, because they have all responded to the same task.

The pair discussions have been recorded to be as authentic a representation as possible of the kind of spoken text that students encounter in small group discussions. Pausing, unfinished sentences and ideas that are undeveloped and reworked as they are spoken are typical of this kind of spoken text. The presentations provide examples of authentic spoken texts of the kind that students would be expected to listen to and understand.

The most important diagnostic questions in speaking and listening are always about meaning. Did the student understand what they heard? Did they communicate their ideas clearly and are they able to engage in a meaningful exchange of ideas? If not, the next set of questions should be about what the student did communicate and understand and how they contributed to the exchange of ideas, as well as what they misunderstood or had difficulty communicating or how they became confused in the exchange of ideas.