ASSESSMENT CONTEXT   Reading

Student Sample: Stage S2 Progressing Towards Video 1

Student information:

The student is from Afghanistan and Dari is his first language. He is fourteen years old and is studying in Year nine at a secondary school. He also speaks Urdu and has been learning English since he arrived in Australia four years ago. He attended an English language school for a year and has attended mainstream secondary school for three years. His schooling has been interrupted as he and his family moved from Afghanistan to Australia via Pakistan. Before he arrived in Australia, he attended lower primary school in Pakistan where Urdu was the language of instruction.

The task:

The students were asked to read and discuss a newspaper article *Cup is half-full for homeless* by Terry Brown, which appeared in the *Herald-Sun* newspaper on 2/12/2008. This was part of a unit of work on the theme of 'Homelessness' undertaken by the class, in which there were a variety of speaking, listening, reading and writing tasks involving a variety of texts and activities on different aspects of the topic. One of these tasks, a role play, has been included in the speaking and listening student work samples at Stage S2.

The class read the novel *A simple gift* by Steven Herrick which explores the nature, circumstances and attitudes towards homeless. The task involved the student in reading the text aloud, answering simple comprehension questions about the main information in the text and making some simple predictions and inferences from the text.

In the task the teacher wanted to assess the extent to which the student could:
• identify the main idea in a short factual text, using guiding questions. (This relates to the Text and Text response strand of the VELS ESL Companion);
• make predictions about what will happen in the text (which relates to the Cultural Conventions and Language Use strand);
• display an understanding of the functions of punctuation marks, such as pausing at comma when reading aloud, pausing at appropriate parts of the text, adjusting speech to reflect dialogue (this relates to the linguistic structures and features stand);
• use organizational features such as headings, to access appropriate information from the text (which relates to the maintaining and negotiating communication strand).

PLEASE NOTE:
Each video sample represents one performance on a specific task within a unit of work, produced by each student with scaffolding at the level appropriate to the student's current stage of language development.

When making judgements to assign a student to a particular **ESL Stage** (A1 to S4) and a **level** within the stage (beginning, progressing towards, at standard), teachers need to consider:
- **a range of tasks**. Not all Indicators of Progress can be demonstrated within one task or activity.
- **the amount of scaffolding** provided to the student in performing these tasks, based on the type of teaching context, the texts used, and the tasks performed. Table 1: The Criteria for the differentiation between stages of the ESL standards on page 10 *of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Companion to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, VCAA* 2005, may assist in determining the level of appropriate scaffolding.
- **the consistency of student performance**. A clustering of a number of performances over time at or around the stage and level should be collected as evidence to support the judgement.
- **the student's control of language across the four aspects** of texts and responses to texts, cultural understandings of language use, linguistic structures and features and maintaining and negotiating communication.

The ESL VELS *Learning Focus*, *Standards and Progression Profile* and *Indicators of Progress* are designed to work together and will assist in making judgements about the stage and level of a student's performance at a particular point in time.

Assignment of a student to a stage and level is an 'on balance' judgement of the student's stage at that point in time. The student should be constantly monitored to determine the ways in which she or he is making progress towards indicators consistent with a higher level or stage.

Reading S2 Standard Indicators of Progress

Text and response *At the end of Stage S2, students can routinely read the following kinds of texts, and respond to them in the following ways:*	Example
• give a personal response to a short text	
• retell ideas or events from familiar texts	
• identify the main idea in short fictional and factual texts using guide questions	1:46 - 2:04
• locate specific information in fictional and factual texts using guide questions	
• extract specific information from subject-based diagrams, graphs, and charts	
• read basic, familiar classroom instructional texts, e.g. simple procedures	
• begin to read longer, more complex texts with support from teacher	ET
• access information from an appropriate ESL ICT resource, e.g. web site, CD Rom	
• make connections between ideas stated directly and close together, e.g. predict ending, infer feelings, link diagram and label, link cause and effect with support	
• respond to creative texts, such as accessible poems and short stories showing a developing understanding of key events, characters and issues	
• choose accessible yet challenging texts for themselves to read and enjoy	
• read and comprehend a simple teacher modified newspaper article	ET
• demonstrate understanding of idea organisation produced by different reference forms, e.g. pronouns, articles	
• show awareness of how some connectives link and sequence ideas within a text, e.g. then, and so	
• interpret items of information from a simple unfamiliar text.	
Linguistic structures and features *At the end of Stage S2, students' understanding of the linguistic structures and features of the texts they read is shown when they:*	Example
• identify links produced by a range of pronouns, e.g. he, they, these	
• use basic features of a web site appropriately, e.g. move between pages using the links provided	
• identify cohesion of ideas produced by related vocabulary	
• display an understanding of the function of punctuation marks, e.g. when reading aloud, pauses at appropriate points in the text, adjusts speech to reflect dialogue	

• link reference items on a sample text, e.g. As the moon moves around the earth it controls the tides	
• read texts that contain compound and complex sentences of two or three clauses	1:25 – 1:46
• identify some basic organisational features of texts, e.g. procedure, recount, report, argument	
• identify some basic language features of texts, e.g. imperative in procedures, past tense in recounts	
• use basic features of a web site appropriately, e.g. move between pages using the links provided.	
Cultural conventions *At the end of Stage S2, students' understanding of the contexts and purposes of texts they At the end of Stage S2, students' understanding of the contexts and purposes of the texts they read is shown when they:*	**Example**
• recognise emotions being expressed by a character in a short narrative	
• display some comprehension beyond the literal level in familiar texts, e.g. suggest possible explanations for a character's actions in a short story or extended text such as a film	
• show awareness that different cultures may have different interpretations of a text, e.g. a character's motivations	
• identify different forms of text, such as narrative, factual text, poetry, e.g. through layout of text and content organisation such as the title and chapter headings	0:11 -0.36
• make predictions about what will happen in a text and read on to find out if they were correct, e.g. 'I think … will happen next.' 'I hope there is a happy ending.'	
• recognise different forms of narratives (e.g. horror, romance)	
• interpret texts by looking for both literal and implied meaning, e.g. use syntactic, logical and cultural clues to work out the meaning of unknown words in the text	
• adjust reading style in response to the demands of the text and the reading task, e.g. scanning the text to get particular information or skimming to get the gist	
• interpret the way information is organised in texts, e.g. layout, illustrations, headings.	
Maintaining and negotiating communication *At the end of Stage S2, students may use the following strategies to assist them to read and comprehend texts:*	**Example**
• use a repertoire of strategies to read familiar and basic factual and fictional texts	ET
• use background or content knowledge to deduce meanings of words or phrases	
• use organisational features to access information from appropriate texts, e.g. table of contents, index, headings, main ideas and supporting details	0:11 - 0:36
• derive meaning of some new words from base words and context, e.g. run, runners, rerun	

• focus on a text and read silently for an extended period	
• predict what is coming next, using semantic and syntactic cues within the text	
• get the gist of an article, e.g. from a magazine, by focusing on subheadings and the first line(s) of each paragraph	
• make inferences from familiar and new material.	

NOTE: ET = Evident Throughout