East Midlands Education Trust

Assessing the Foundation Subjects



Assessing the Foundation Subjects in Our Schools

An effective and efficient system of assessment has a profound impact on children's primary school education by providing a framework in which pupil progress can be expressed and monitored.

Assessment in the classroom helps pupils embed and use knowledge fluently and develops their understanding. Teachers use assessment to raise pupils' achievement: pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve.



The main aims for assessment are therefore that it is: informative, diagnostic, evaluative, accurate and purposeful.

We acknowledge that there are two distinct types of assessment used by our schools. These include:

- I. Assessment for learning which helps teachers and children identify the next steps needed to make progress. It takes account of children's strengths and areas for improvement and provides children and teachers with an insight into the learning that promotes success for all.
- 2. Assessment of learning which more is associated with milestone judgements as to where children are at a specific point in time in relation to both their cohort and nationally. Assessment of learning shows what children can do without support.

Quick Retrieval Tasks

Retrieval practice is an effective learning technique that helps in memory retention because it involves recollection of prior knowledge, which improves the chances of knowledge shifting to long-term memory. The act of recalling learned information from memory (with little or no support) also helps children to apply the knowledge to new situations.



The multi-store model of memory by Atkinson and Shiffrin

Retrieval practice Principles

- I. Find a method that involves all children.
- 2. Make checking and correcting accurate and easy to do.
- 3. Vary the diet and mix it up to allow children to explore their schema in different ways.
- 4. Specify exactly the knowledge the retrieval will be based.
- 5. Make it time efficient so not to dominate the whole lesson.
- 6. Make it workload efficient.
- 7. Keep it generative allowing children to think for themselves.

This type of retrieval practice is often done through quizzes, games, and other types of exercises.

I. Making Connections

Ask children to make their own connections between a set of two or more images. With the aim of children having to recall knowledge on a range of different subjects or topics, this high-order linking task encourages children to make connections between different areas of their knowledge.

For example, how would they connect Henry VIII, a balanced diet diagram and a landfill site? More importantly, what knowledge would discussing those connections require them to retrieve?



2. Flashcards

Children can create a deck of flashcards with a partner containing words, pictures or questions and then quiz each other using the cards as prompts. They can be easily tailored to a particular topic, and children can recall information by looking at one side of the card and giving the answer on the other side. This makes it easier for them to test their knowledge quickly and effectively through an interactive retrieval practice exercise.

After a set interval of time, ask children to work with old decks of flashcards to really make the retrieval practice concept come into play!



3. Quizzes

Quizzes help to reinforce knowledge. Furthermore, quizzes can be used to track children's learning and measure their understanding of concepts. This can provide invaluable feedback on how well they are absorbing the material and what areas might require further practice.

Quizzes can be performed individually or in groups, pairs, or as a class.

Teachers can also use different apps, websites or a ppt slide to ask single or multiple-choice questions. Children can write down answers on whiteboards/books, tell a friend or by telling the answer to the teacher.

4. 'The Power Paragraph'

More suitable for older children, they should put pen to paper and just write for 3 minutes. It doesn't matter if it is in a logical order or what the spelling or punctuation is like. The purpose is for pure retrieval practice, designed specifically to enable children to build confidence in getting the knowledge in their head down on paper.

5. 'Speak Like an Expert'

Ask children to speak for up to two minutes on previous learning, without hesitation or repetition. This will also exercise crucial speaking and listening skills. They should be encouraged to use certain terminology or subject-specific vocabulary. As children are engaged in this task, teachers can observe what they are able to recall, and listen out for any common misconceptions. These can then be addressed while they are still fresh in children's minds or added to future lessons for reinforcement.

6. Concept maps

Ask children to create a keyword map of related learnt words or facts. These concept maps would indicate what the children do and don't know while showing what they already possess in their long term memory. They also help to engage the student in making connections between different concepts and ideas, providing a deeper understanding of the material.



7. Silly songs and physical actions

Teach the children simple rhymes or songs which can be performed regularly.

KWL Grid

A KWL grid is a study tool that identifies what is already known (K), what would like to be known (W) and what has been learnt (L). It allows children to activate prior knowledge, develop a purpose for learning through interests and summarise what they have learned.

KWL grids:

- are easy to use.
- demonstrate the level of knowledge and gaps in understanding.
- motivate and engage children in the learning process.
- track progress and learning outcomes.
- offer flexibility and can be adapted to the lesson or children's needs.

An addition to the KWL grid could be a vocabulary section - what do children think new vocabulary means at the start of a unit and what have they understand it to mean at the end.

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Floor Books

Floor books organise and collate children's thinking, focusing on what they find valuable, meaningful and interesting. Floor books can be used for any age group to showcase children's conceptual understanding, their questions and comments to inform their learning journey.

While writing in a floor book children perform shared thinking in a more formal way, which enables them to develop reasoning skills and recall other children's ideas and record them in the form of photographs, drawing and writing.

A floor book is a working record where children can share and reflect on after the lessons and can be used to support teachers as part of the on-going assessment process.







Using Computers

POP tasks can be completed on laptops, computers or ipads using a variety of websites and apps. Examples of these include:

Explorify - the activities on this website can be used for formative assessment - prompt the children with phrases like 'tell me more', 'why do you think that?', 'what do you think?', 'can you explain more about that idea?'

Blooket - Blooket is a gamified learning platform where teachers host games through question sets and children answer on their own devices. This is an engaging assessmentcentered tool. When students get correct answers, they receive points, which allow them to buy and sell 'Blooks'.

Kahoot - Kahoot is a fun and motivating assessment tool. From quick pulse checks to formative assessment and tracking class progress, it can help teachers capture actionable insights and target instruction in any learning environment.

QR codes - these codes can be scanned by any device with a camera, such as tablets or laptops and can direct the children to a web page or a Google Form for a quick assessment or a daily activity such as a flashback or exit ticket. At the end of a unit, a QR code scavenger hunt is an excellent way for children to check their own understanding.

QR codes can also be produced and sent home for parents to scan and see their child's work.

Teacher Assessment in Primary Science - TAPS supports a valid, reliable, and manageable system of science assessment which will have a positive impact on children's learning. The rich formative assessment information collected by teachers in the course of ongoing classroom work can also utilised for summative purposes.







Weekly Roundups

Each week children are presented with four questions from all the subjects covered. An overall 'Roundup' is created and given to the children at the end of a half term.



Use of Video or Photos

The use of video or photographs for assessment purposes is great for not only oral presentation skills but also can be used to see how well a child has understood a concept. For example, the teacher can capture a child's work as they're working through a problem, or record verbally their ideas so that their level of understanding can be assessed.

Recordings can give teachers and families visual evidence of a child's development over time. In addition, photographs provide teachers with evidence of children's understanding that can then be analysed at a later time, away from the buzz of the classroom.

They can also help teachers to make sense of a child's thinking outside the classroom moment and plan future instruction more intentionally.



End of Unit Assessment

An end of unit assessment helps to evaluate the children's learning, academic accomplishment, and skill acquisitions at the end of a unit. The typical features of this type of assessment may:

- link to the central idea and any key questions •
- consider text types covered in English lessons
- weave in cross-curricular links
- be recorded in a variety of forms. .

Summative assessment helps a teacher to evaluate the child's progress from whichever starting point they have identified. It also helps to highlight any common gaps in the children's learning and if there is any need to develop further teaching methods or enrichment activities.

The assessment task should be meaningful and informative and facilitate children's learning. These tasks can take any form such as:

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- debate •
- written piece
- double-page spread •
- artwork
- designing activity
- observations

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