

# Reading Activities for any 'Reader'

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# Reading Activities for any 'Reader'

## What could be better than having fun while reading?

The purpose of this activity booklet and video is to provide ideas, resources and a source of inspiration to educators while using Graded Readers in the English Class.

The activities suggested in the booklet are tuned to:

- CEFR-levelled graded Readers: Pre-A / A1/ A1+/ A2;
- Three major stages in reading process: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading;
- Self, peer and teacher formative assessment;
- Accommodation strategies based on Universal Design for Learning.

All activities suggested are aimed to be used by any Reader at the same CEFR-level grade, where educators can modify, simplify or expand as pleased; and in addition, aimed towards boosting the reading experience of all our diverse type of learners: any reader! So, ***Reading Activities for any 'Reader'*** makes much more sense now!

First, it is wise to check some *Comprehension Strategies* which are valid for all reader levels and linguistic means such as Speaking, Listening and Reading. The most elementary comprehension strategy is: *attention* which means to be active listeners or readers. By having full attention, we mean being alert and conscious of specific processes which are portrayed in the following chart:



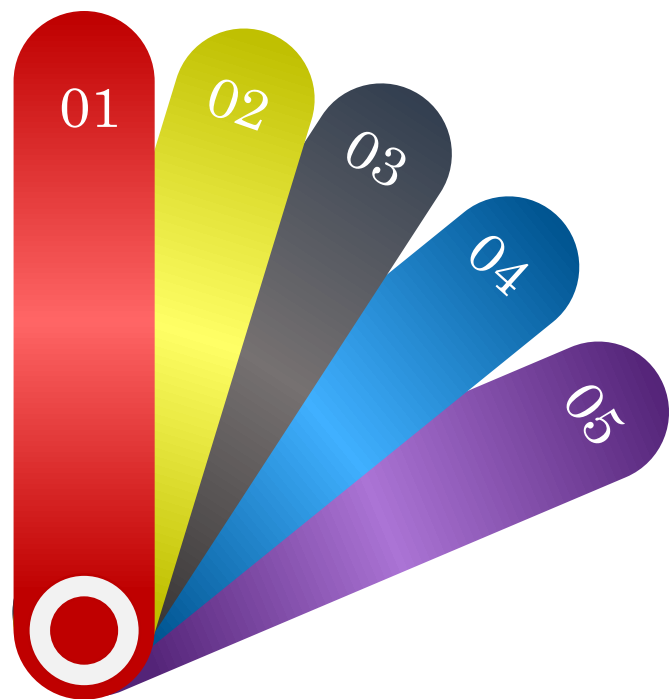
It is by the conscious and/or unconscious modelling of the educator that all language strategies are shown to the learners. In addition to the 'active attention' process previously described, there are other comprehension strategies which will be mentioned at next

Comprehension corresponds to the final process of Literacy, therefore effective teaching of literacy is essential. *Literacy Strategies* are applicable to all ages and content areas. So, as a Core cross curricular skill in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Framework, all educators should model and refer to these strategies in their classes.

Some literacy strategies are:

### 1. **Predicting**

It allows learners to use information from the text, such as titles, headings, pictures and diagrams to anticipate what will happen in the story (Bailey, 2015). When making predictions, learners envision what will come next in the text, based on their prior knowledge.





#### **4. Clarifying**

It is an umbrella term for a set of cognitive strategies learners can use to identify where they have comprehension difficulties and how they can get at the meaning of a word, phrase, sentence or passage.

#### **2. Inferring**

It allows learners to interpret and draw conclusions from the information stated in a text and their prior knowledge.

So taking the time to provide experiences that build sufficient knowledge is critical.

#### **3. Monitoring**

It refers to self/guided monitoring when the learner uses the meaning of the story, language structure, or visual information to check his/her own reading. Cross checking allows self-correction and identifying mismatches.

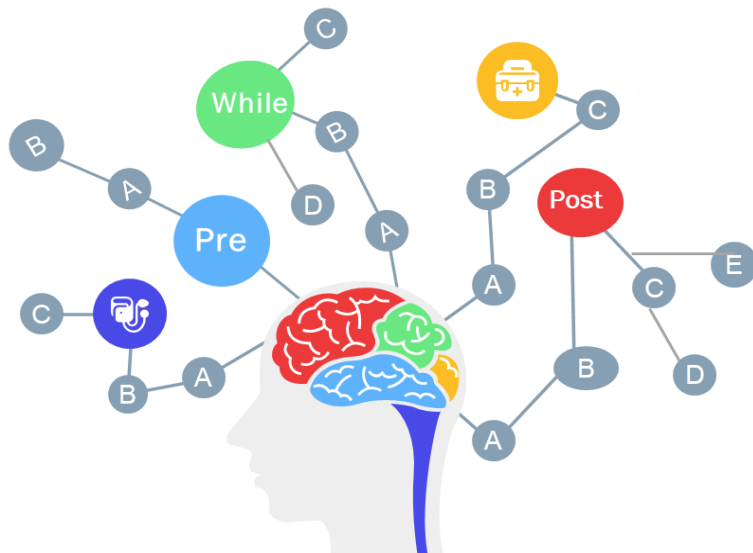
#### **5. Evaluating**


When learners evaluate information, they confirm, extend, or change their personal views based on the topic of the reading.

By reviewing some comprehension strategies as those presented in 'active attention' and 'literacy strategies' which can / should be modelled by any teacher in any subject, we are highlighting educators' preponderous role by systematically modelling those strategies as for learners to develop their comprehension skills.




As previously mentioned, comprehension strategies are suitable for all reader levels and linguistic means such as speaking, listening and reading. When encountering pre-reading / while-reading and after-reading activities, these are tuned with literacy strategies which aim to boost learners' comprehension, particularly the learners' reading comprehension skills.





Besides role modelling comprehension strategies, educators are expected to diversify on how contents are presented, how activities are conducted and how students can demonstrate their understanding. In other words, educators must offer multiple means that best serves all learners regardless of their abilities and backgrounds which is the very foundation of *Universal Design for Learning*.



Universal Design means designing for people of all abilities, which is the very core of the best practices in teaching and learning. The descriptors of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) being implemented in the English Class corresponds to:

- ❑ **Presentation** and engagement of language skills and contents must come in *multiple formats* regardless of the target skills.
- ❑ Students need a *variety of ways* to **Practice** and perform the target language skills. Learners must be able to show what they can do with the language in a way that best supports their abilities.

By including the three Principles of UDL: multiple ways of engagement, representation and expression, educators ensure all students have equal opportunities to access and engage with rigorous academic work.



## How to help learners with reading challenges?

It is relevant to mention that by using a wide spectrum of resources and activities to engage, produce and perform specific learning contents, educators are immediately offering help to all type of learners.

When in presence of learners with specific challenges, accommodations can be carried out. ***Accommodations*** are changes that remove barriers and provide the student with equal access to learning. Accommodations don't change what is being learnt, but how it is being learnt. In other words, learning objectives remain the same and students can validly demonstrate learning in the General Curriculum.

Reading Comprehension activities are primarily based on reading, though we include a variety of activities such as listening to the text, reading aloud, verbally summarising what was read or writing.

Accommodations for students with reading challenges will firstly be presented, and later accommodations for students with listening, speaking and writing challenges will be mentioned.



## *Accommodations for students with Reading challenges:*

- Provide highlighted material
- Allow a peer to read text aloud to student
- Look for same content in another medium (movie, audio)
- Provide alternative methods for student to contribute to the group, such as role playing or dramatizing (oral reading should be optional)
- Allow extra time for reading
- Request a one-page summary or study guide which identify key ideas and terms as the reading assignment
- Provide questions before student reads a selection (include page and paragraph numbers)
- Type or use a larger type material for easier reading
- Be more concrete-using pictures and manipulatives
- Reduce the amount of new ideas
- Provide experience before and after reading as a reference for new concepts
- State the objective and relating it to previous experiences
- Help the student visualize what is read

Accommodations that suit students with listening, speaking or writing challenges have recently been presented for those students with reading challenges, therefore only new accommodations for the other linguistic skills will be presented at next.

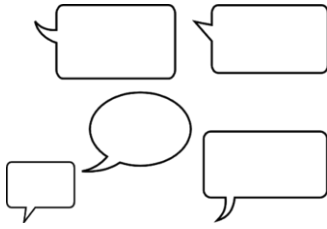
Accommodations for students with *listening challenges*:

- Pre-teach difficult vocabulary and concepts
- Teach the mental activities involved in listening — mental note-taking, questioning, reviewing
- Provide study guides/worksheets
- Provide visuals via the board or overhead
- Use flash cards
- Have the student close his eyes and try to visualize the information
- Have the student take notes and use coloured markers to highlight
- Give explanations in small, distinct steps
- Provide written as well as oral directions
- Have the student repeat directions
- When giving directions to the class, leave a pause between each step so student can carry out the process in his mind
- Shorten the listening time required
- Provide written and manipulative tasks



Accommodations for students with  
*writing challenges:*

- Multiple-choice
- True/false
- Matching
- Reduce or omit assignments requiring copying
- Encourage shared note-taking
- Allow the use of a tape recorder, a typewriter, or a computer
- Accepting alternate forms of reports: Oral reports - video or audio recorded report - Collage, cartoon, or other art – Maps - Photographic essay - Panel discussion
- Allow more time
- Shorten the written assignment (preparing an outline or summary)
- Provide a sample of what the finished paper should look like to help him organize the parts of the assignment
- Provide practice using: Story starters - Open-ended stories - Oral responses



Accommodations for students with  
***verbal expression challenges:***

- To accept an alternate form of information sharing, such as the following: Written report - Artistic creation - Chart, graph, or table - Photo essay – Map - Review of films - Taped report
- Ask questions requiring short answers
- Provide a prompt, such as beginning the sentence for the student or giving a picture cue
- Give the rules for class discussion (e.g., hand raising)
- Specifically teach body and language expression
- Wait for students to respond — don't call on the first student to raise his hand
- First ask questions at the information level — giving facts and asking for facts back; then have the student break in gradually by speaking in smaller groups and then in larger groups.

## *Pre-Reading Activities*

Pre-reading strategies aim to establish a purpose for reading, to activate and build background knowledge, and address unfamiliar vocabulary words/concepts.

Based on recent research (Klund 2020), when pre-reading activities devote to 50-60% of the lesson, these activities are extremely beneficial for the understanding of the text.

Pre-Reading Activities may include:

### 1. **Pictionary:** (objective: to introduce new vocabulary)

- Select some of the key words from the text.
- Put the class into two or three groups. A learner from each group (at the same time) comes to the whiteboard.
- They are told the word and they have to draw that word. The use letters or numbers in their drawing is not allowed.
- The other students try to guess what the word is and earn points for their team.



### 2. **True or False?** (objective: to introduce the topic or context)

- Prepare 4 sentences expressing opinions about the topic/context, then sticks them in the 4 corners of the classroom.
- Students go and stand near the opinion they disagree or consider to be false. The groups explain why by referring to previous knowledge or information interpreted from the pictures in the text.



### 3. My Crystal Ball: (objective: to infer information)



- Set the class in groups of 3 members whom will randomly distribute the following roles: spokesperson, writer, coordinator.
- By looking at the pictures and chapter titles, learners must guess the plot, characters and time period the text was written.
- The coordinator synthesizes the inferences made by the group, the writer jots down the information into clear notes and the spokesperson uses the notes to share their guess with the rest of the class.

! WHY  
WHAT?  
? WHO!  
WHEN

### 4. The 4 WH Game (objective: to research information)

- Students should identify the origins of the text, such as: date, historical context, and background information about the author.
- Request students to share their findings in a discussion or submit as a written task.

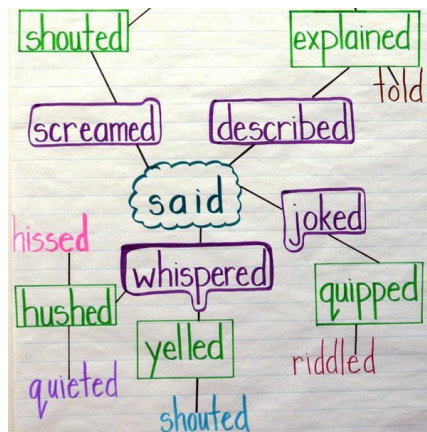
**5. My Story from the picture:** (objective: to use narrative skills and vocabulary)

- Set groups of 3-4 members who will create a story of their own based on the pictures of the text.
- Provide each group with a set of 4-8 words previously introduced and questions words Why, When, Who, What for students to interact.



**6. Word Families –or Semantic Map:** (objective: to identify relationship between items) Students can work individually or in pairs.

- Based on prior vocabulary pre-reading activities, learners write the 10-15 words that called their attention the most in small paper stripes or post it.
- Learners establish the relationship/category between the lexical items, if any.





**7. The K-W-L-H chart:** (objective: to promote learning autonomy)

It helps students activate prior knowledge, identify areas of inquiry, and reflect on their reading / learning.

- This strategy is often used as a whole group activity where a large chart with four columns is made to record everyone's ideas.

K – stands for what students already Know about the topic.

W – stands for what students Want to Learn by this text.

L – stands for what students have Learned while reading this text.

H – stands for ideas of How to Learn More after reading this text.

<b>Know</b>	<b>Want to Learn</b>	<b>Learned</b>	<b>How to Learn More</b>

## *While-Reading Activities*

While-reading strategies aim to improve comprehension, analysis of the text and practice meta-cognitive skills. In other words, students are able to confirm predictions, gather and organize information.

While-Reading Activities may include:

1. **Colouring flags:** (objective: to identify events, descriptions and sequences) This activity should firstly be role modelled by the teacher and then students can continue on their own.

If using 3 different coloured pens, each colour represents a specific type of information in the text; for example: red brackets show where events take place; blue underline indicates where description are made by the use of adjectives, and a green hashtag signals where time sequences are mentioned. Agree previously with the students on how many elements are to be recognized.

2. **Choral Reading:** (objective: to develop fluency, comprehension and sigh vocabulary) This is an important step to understanding the human emotion and subtle meanings in text.

Have student pairs or groups read parts of a passage in unison alternating fast and slow lines, loud and soft lines, high and low voices, and emphasizing key words or phrases.

A variation is playing the audio of the text.

**3. Student to Student Conversation:** (objective: to promote integration of skills)

Students engage in a conversation after reading a paragraph or specific amount of text. In the conversation, features that will support or question literal and inferential comprehension may arise.

**4. Say what was not written:** (objective: to interpret and expand an event) This activity can be carried out in written or verbal form.

Either individually or in set groups, students can create information regarding areas of the plot or characters that are not mentioned in the text. For example: why was Little Red Riding Hood's Grandmother sick.



**5. Short quizzes:** (objective: formative activity to check understanding) Either individually or in set groups, students can participate in the process of creating the questions, or answering using online tools.

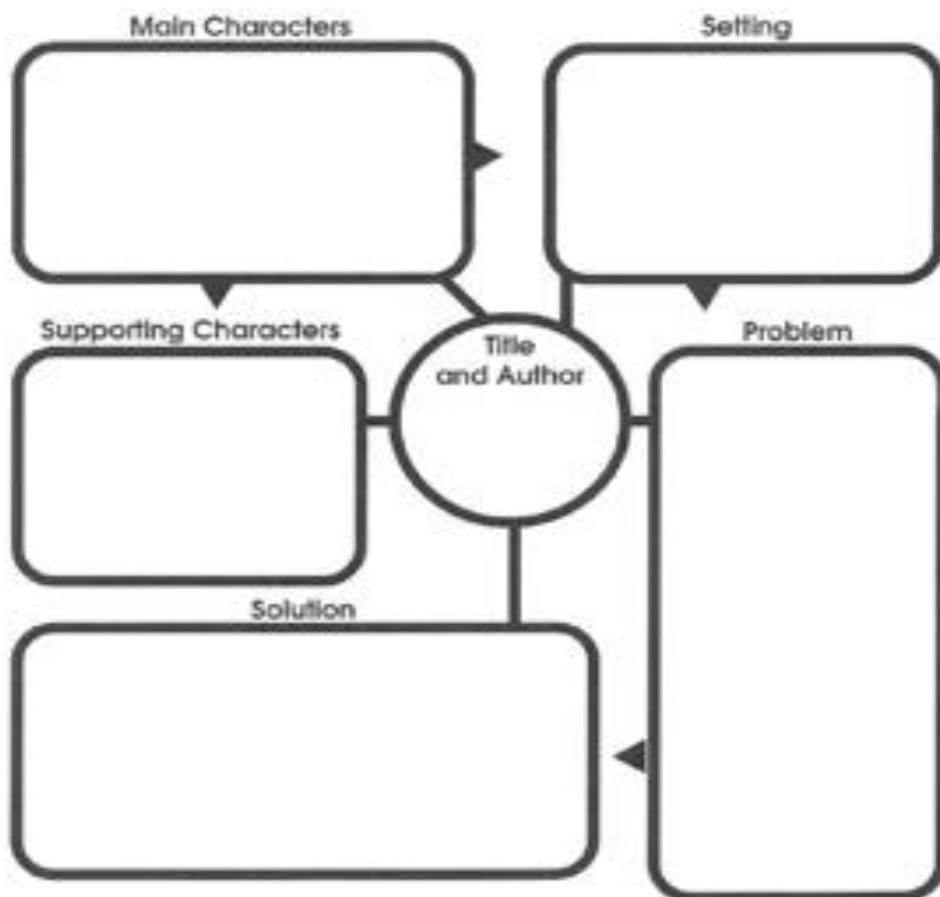
**6. Playmaking:** (objective: to communicate freely and imaginatively) The activity corresponds to the interpretation of characters and events, it is extremely useful for Readers which have long stretches of dialogue in them. Allow them to simplify the script and rehearse. It can be recorded as a video or podcast.


The preparation removes the fear that some students have about improvising.

**7. Story Map:** (objective: to identify story characters, plot, setting, problem and solution, students read carefully to learn the details)

A story map is a strategy that uses a graphic organizer to help students organize the elements in a section of the story (while-reading) or the whole story (after-reading). They help students of varying abilities organize information and ideas efficiently.

- Students to fill in the gaps in the story map in the way which seems to them to be most appropriate.
- Discuss the different versions with the class.






**8. The Reader's Horoscope:** (objective: to interpret, evaluate, and reflect upon the meaning and impact of the text) This activity can be presented orally or in written form.

Students assign a zodiac sign to each character and create a weekly prediction for the character.

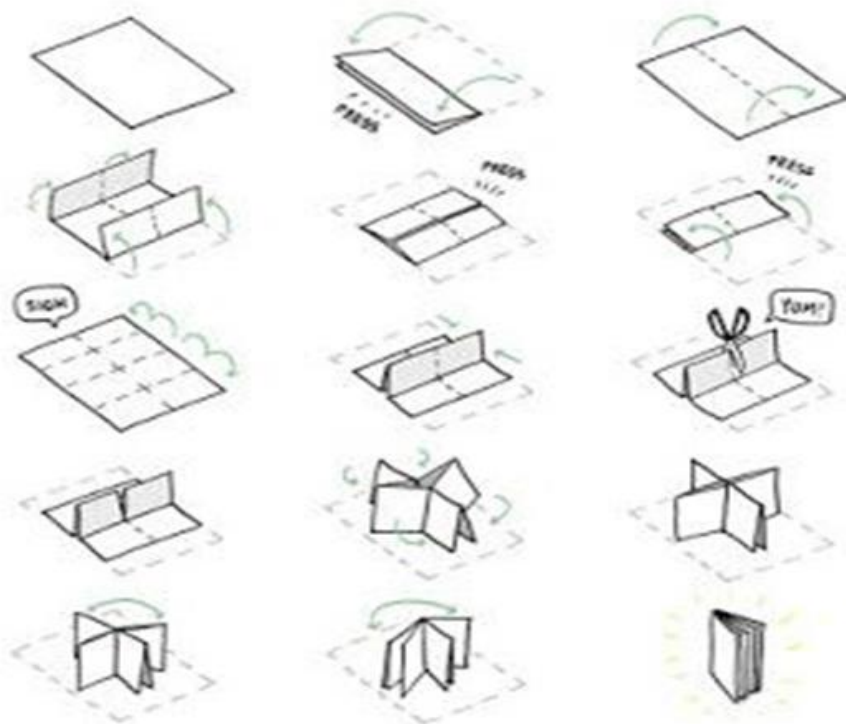
**9. Three Minute Summary:** (objective: to process information and clarify) This activity can be carried out by the teacher or the students.

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- Set specific reading sections where students process information by providing a short brief during which they summarize new content, connect new content to prior knowledge, and are free to ask clarifying questions.

**10. Inventory Foldable Book:** (objective: to recall and organize specific concepts)

- Students make a foldable book with information hard to recall (vocabulary, events, characters relationship)
- Each students' foldable book can be used later for the final assessment.

HOW TO FOLD A  
**SHEET-O-PAPER**  
INTO A  
**8-PAGE ZINE**



## *Post-Reading Activities*

Post-reading strategies help readers summarize their learning, check for understanding, and organize their thoughts and ideas.

Post-Reading Activities may include:

**1. Interview the Character:** (objective: to process information and develop creativity)


- Students prepare questions they would like to make to one or two main characters from the story.
- When all classmates have prepared their questions, set pairs and assign a role to each student.
- Students answer from the characters perspective and discuss how the character may have evolved from the beginning to the end of the story.

**2. The End of the Story:** (objective: to develop creative thinking)

- Set groups of 4 members and ask students to change the end of the story to something unpredictable.
- Students to share their endings.

**3. Designing a Poster:** (objective: to develop creative thinking)

- Learners create a poster advertising the book (provide a specific set of information the poster must have. The poster can be made in paper or using digital tools.




**4. Evaluating the Book Cover:** (objective: to reflect, analyse, evaluate the effectiveness and accuracy of the cover, and then write about their findings.)

- Students evaluate the book cover as a marketing tool. How effective is the book cover in order to represent the book itself?

**5. Book Review:** (objective: to reflect, analyse, evaluate and synthesize information) Provide students with an outline of what information is expected in the review.

- Organize groups of students and ask them to provide a book review either as a written report or video.



**6. Who said it?** (objective: to reflect and analyse lexicon and develop inferences)

- Ask a group students to choose a set number of phrases from a number of characters and then prepare a matching game of: phrases and characters on pieces of paper or technological tools.
- Each group to exchanges the Who said it? game so they match the character to the statement.

**7. Watching the movie** Nothing best than watching the movie based on the book and, letting students enjoy, activate background information and appreciate features which might have been overlooked during the reading.



## *Reader Assessments*

Probably the main objective the Reader Assessment is Reading Comprehension, which focuses on these specific reading skills:

- Ability to identify main idea and key details,
- Ability to sequence a series of events,
- Ability to answer specific questions,
- Ability to make inferences, and
- Ability to identify and use new vocabulary from the text.

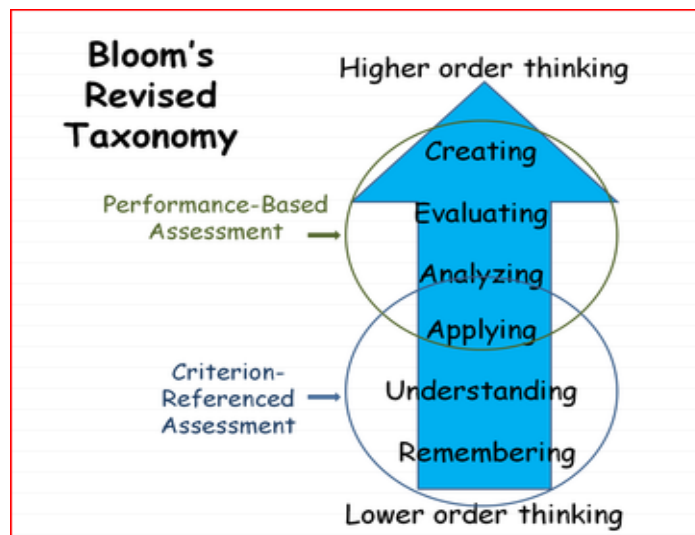
Nonetheless, we understand reading comprehension as a component of continuous language development and language comprehension, therefore many others aspects should be included in the elaboration of an assessment for a Reader.

Many informal assessments can be carried out along the reading process monitoring the students' progress in understanding, commitment, participation, amongst others. This can be checked by the teacher if the learners provide a positive performance to the following teacher inquiries. Can they re-tell the story with little trouble in their own language? Can they react to the story freely by saying what they liked or disliked? Ask 'What is it about?' 'Who are the main characters?' 'What's happening on this page?' Ask how it ended. Was it a sad or happy ending? Why? Ask which characters they liked best and why. There is no possible way of answering without understanding what is being read as a continuous process.

Assessing a Reader is not only checking the understanding of the plot of the story, but the impact this activity has in the continuum process of the learners' language development and comprehension. Therefore, assessments can use many features of the Reader in order to request multiple evidences of language development and competencies, such as critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, amongst others.

All pre-while-post activities can be considered cumulative formative assessments either self monitored, assessed by peers or by the teacher.

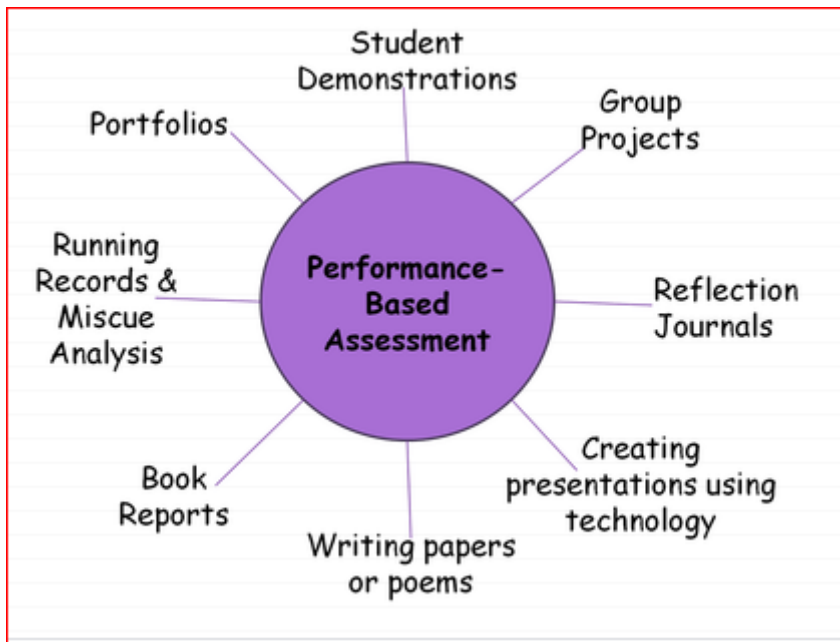
Should there be a final summative assessment, the teacher should decide which type of summative assessment to apply: criterion-referenced evaluation and performance-based assessment.



<http://literacylighthouse.weebly.com/assessment-essentials.html>

Criterion referenced evaluation is based on the objectives set out for the class; in other words, criterion-referenced assessment uses objective questions to assess student's basic knowledge and comprehension.

Performance based assessment allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating products, synthesizing or evaluating information, or participating in discussions or debates. It requires students to be active participants in the learning process by requiring the students to demonstrate their knowledge instead of just regurgitating facts.



<http://literacylighthouse.weebly.com/assessment-essentials.html>

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