Teach2Learn

# Teach2Learn
# Methodological Assessment Tool

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# Impressum

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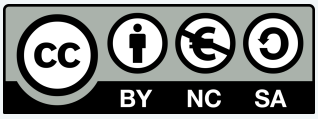

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# About the Project

The project "Teach2Learn - tools for teaching independent learners" recognizes the value of acquiring official language comprehension skills at the beginning of the educational journey. The common main goal is to empower teachers and educational experts with a methodology and a digital platform with practical exercises for teaching reading comprehension skills, targeting school children between grades 2nd – 4th. The project provides the necessary tools and exercises to further gain the skills acquired through reading, such as comprehension, fluency and independence, and give students the ability to turn words on a page into a clear meaning. The project addresses a common problem within the educational systems in the partner countries - Austria, Bulgaria, Spain, Portugal, Luxemburg and Turkey – the reading comprehension barrier in the 2th, 3th and 4th grade of primary education of children from minority and migrant/refugee background or whose mother language is different than the official language of the educational system. The difficulties these children face in obtaining reading comprehension skills are directly linked with a poor performance in their educational path and result in high dropout rates as these skills are vital for the overall attainment in school in next educational levels. Effective communication in one's mother tongue and in foreign languages are 1st and 2nd key competence for lifelong learning and fundamental to human social interaction, to intercultural contexts and to effective inclusion in educational systems.

The project itself is focused on promoting a comprehensive approach to language teaching and learning by assisting students to learn, comprehend and like the official language of a country which is not their native language. The project activities and outputs address the outlined needs in an interactive way and assist teachers, parents and young learners in their journey to obtain efficient reading abilities and habits in order to become autonomous readers. The project also addresses learning disadvantages, early school leaving and low proficiency in basic skills as it aims at overcoming a strong learning barrier for these students. The reading comprehension skills are vital for the overall success in school, lead to good performance in their educational path and is a strong prevention of dropout.

The project activities include designing assessment tools for teachers' training needs, skill training program for instructors teaching reading comprehension skills to students, grade 2th to 4th, and developing interactive platforms with practical and user-friendly resources for teachers, parents and students. It will also develop and upload a database of videos demonstrating practical use of the project resources. The final outcomes will be available to use for all primary school teachers in the respective countries.

# What is the assessment methodology and tool

The Assessment tool will be used to measure the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process and will demonstrate if the participants in the process are meeting their educational goals - obtaining strong reading comprehension skills to primary students whose mother tongue is different from the official language of the country. It will also allow professionals to recommend types of additional teachers training on the subject thus promoting teachers' professional growth through reflection and dialogue.

# Who may use the assessment tool

The Methodological assessment tool is designed for:

- School directors, school managers, school inspectors, trainers, district administrators and other stakeholders who are engaged with primary teachers' performance and qualification needs
- Primary school teachers in grades 2nd-4th from the project partners' countries, who teach reading comprehension skills to students from a language background different from the official language of the country and strive to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

# Overview of the qualification needs

In the framework of the project, all partners analyzed in-depth the qualifications and competences required for primary school language teachers, as well as their training needs.

In each partner country there are professional qualification requirements for primary school language teachers - a four-year bachelor's university degree in pedagogy and mandatory additional relevant professional qualification, like master's degree and/or specialization. In some countries, there are additional requirements that need to be fulfilled before a person attempts to apply for this educational qualification. For example, the first requirement for becoming a teacher in the public school in Luxembourg is the mastery of the three official languages: French, German and Luxembourgish or an aptitude test in Austria, which tests different abilities of the prospective teachers like rhythmic- musical aptitude, determination of physical-motor aptitude, as well as a computer skills and personal motivation. In regards to the competences that are required, partners share the following personal and professional ones as common:

- Detailed knowledge and practical skills as per the specific reality in each country
- Linguistic and idiomatic competencies
- "Learning to Learn" competency
- Social competences
- Communication competence
- Planning and Organizing competence
- Digital competence

# Training needs

Our analysis managed to conclude and unite the following mandatory additional teachers training that needs to be undertaken, when teaching reading comprehension to students whose mother tongue is different from the one at school:

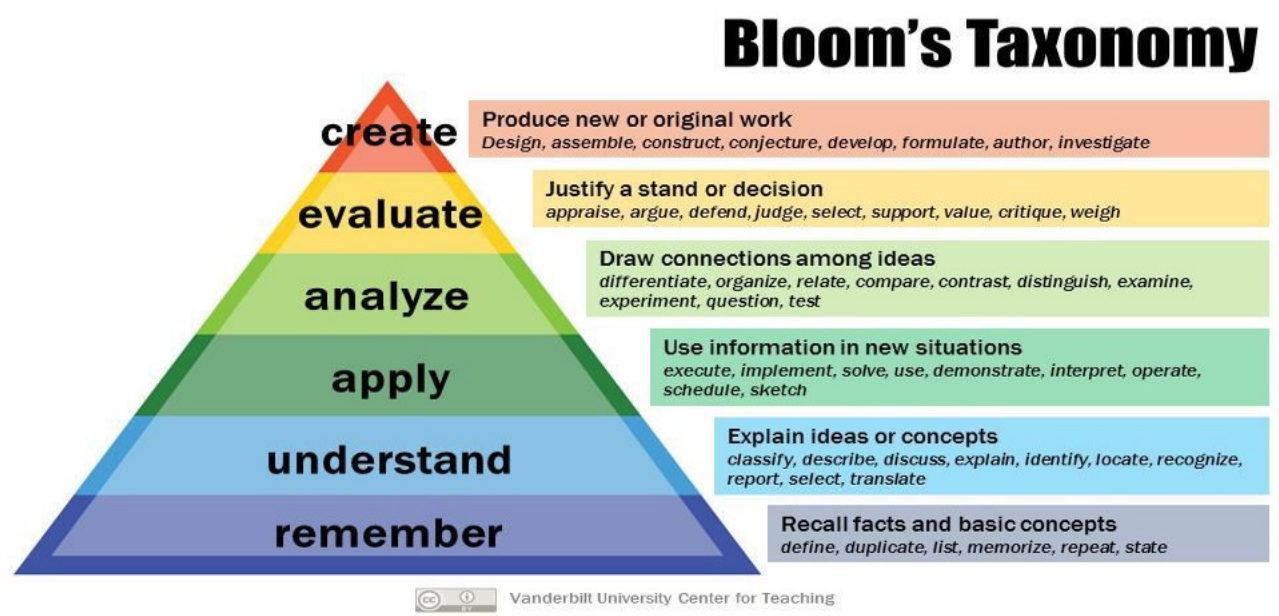
- Teachers need a specific training on how to teach reading comprehension to students whose mother tongue is not the same as in school
- Training that provides practical tools, information and knowledge of linguistic resources for helping students overcome the difficulties in mastering the reading technique.
- Training on how to gamify the "learning to read" process.
- Training on the cultural and background knowledge of the learning process, habits of students from diverse linguistic backgrounds and how to approach them. Based on that understanding, teachers shall be trained with practical tools on how to help children improve their reading comprehension skill.
- Training on inclusive teaching to create a positive and motivating experience for the young students and their parents in regards to learning how to read in the official language of the country.
- Social skills training, that includes appropriate approaches to underprivileged or marginalized children (especially if they come from traumatic past or present) and their parents, so that teachers are able to create a good and motivational environment for the children to be inspired to improve their reading comprehension skills.

## Basics of the Assessment methodology used in the project

"The goal of all readers should be to understand what they read" (Teele, 2004, p. 92). Research shows good readers are actively involved with the text, and they are aware of the processes they use to understand what they read.

Drawing from research on reading, the proposed assessment tool considers reading as a process involving word recognition, comprehension, and fluency.

- Word recognition is the ability of a reader to recognize written words correctly.
- Comprehension is the ability to read text, process it, and understand its meaning.
- Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately and quickly.



Namely, these are:

- knowledge or its revised version remember with verbs, such as copying, defining, finding, locating, identifying, highlighting, retrieving, selecting, matching, etc.
- comprehension or understanding with grouping, comparing, contrasting, predicting, summarizing, exemplifying, etc. (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)

Within the two cognitive domains, the assessment tool focuses on the following areas of observation on primary teachers' practice and performance:

## 1. Using effective strategies to improve students reading comprehension skills

Teachers shall help improve student comprehension through valid and easy-to-understand instructions of reading strategies. Providing reading comprehension instructions allows students to see, learn, and use a variety of comprehension strategies as they read.

Predicting, making connections, visualizing, inferring, questioning, and summarizing are strategies shown by research to improve reading comprehension (Block & Israel, 2005). It is important to teach the strategies by naming the strategy and how it should be used, modeling through the think-aloud process, group practice, partner practice, and independent use of the strategy (Duke & Pearson, 2005).

Predicting: Good readers have a purpose for reading. One strategy for improving comprehension is predicting, which helps the reader set a purpose for their reading. This strategy also allows for more student interaction, which increases student interest and improves their understanding of the text (Oczkus, 2003). An important aspect in the prediction process is comparing the prediction to the outcome in the actual text. Without this aspect of the prediction process, it becomes meaningless to improve the student's comprehension (Duke & Pearson, 2005). Some of the approaches for teaching predicting are teacher modeling, predicting throughout the text, with partners, with a graphic organizer, or using post-it notes throughout the text. Using the title, table of contents, pictures, and key words is one prediction strategy. Another key prediction strategy is to have students predict at specific points through the text, evaluate the prediction, and revise predictions if necessary (Teele, 2004).

Making Connections: Research has shown that good readers use their experiences and knowledge to make predictions and formulate ideas as they read (Block & Israel, 2005). This strategy could be instructed by making comparisons, teacher modeling, using graphic organizers, think-pair-share, and teacher questioning. Students can make text-to-self connections through drawing, making a chart, or writing. Teachers might ask students if they have ever experienced anything like the events in the text. Students can make text-to-text connections through drawing, making a chart, writing, and graphic organizers. These text-to-text connections could be based upon how characters in the story relate to each other, or how story elements relate between stories. Students can make text-to-world connections through drawing, making a chart, writing, or graphic organizers. Text-to-world connections could be done by comparing characters in a story to characters today, or comparing the content of the text to the world today (Teele, 2004).

Visualizing: Visualizing is another strategy good readers employ when comprehending text (Adler, 2001). Visualization requires the reader to construct an image of what is read. This image is stored in the reader's memory as a representation of the reader's interpretation of the text (National Reading

Panel, 2000). Students can practice the visualization strategy by writing and drawing or drawing and writing. Teachers have students visualize settings, characters, and actions in a story.

Inferring: Inferring refers to reading between the lines. Students need to use their own knowledge along with information from the text to draw their own conclusions (Serafini, 2004). Through inferring, students will be able to draw conclusions, make predictions, identify underlying themes, use information to create meaning from text, and use pictures to create meaning (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). Students can be taught to use illustrations, graphs, and titles from the text to make inferences. One method used for inferring is the double-entry notebook. Students can record ideas in one column and evidence from the text in the second column.

Questioning: Questioning is a process readers use before, during, and after reading. The questioning process requires readers to ask questions of themselves to construct meaning, enhance understanding, find answers, solve problems, find information, and discover new information (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). Teachers need to ask students questions during and after reading a passage. Students are asked to return to the text to find the answer to questions. The teacher's model and the students practice to discriminate between questions that are literal, inferred, or based on the reader's prior knowledge. Children are taught to generate questions during reading and evaluate questions as literal, inferential, or based on prior knowledge. By using the student generated questioning strategy, text segments are integrated and thereby improving reading comprehension (NRP, 2000).

Summarizing: The process of summarization requires the reader to determine what is important when reading and to condense the information in the reader's own words (Adler, 2001). Teacher modeling and student practice of the summarization process has proven effective for improving students' ability to summarize text and to improve text comprehension. Students can be taught to identify main ideas, connect the main ideas, eliminate redundant and unnecessary information, and remember what they read with the summarization strategy.

## II. Teaching process evaluation

The assessment tools considers three main process-oriented phases, defined to articulate the areas of evaluation of the effectiveness of the teaching while related to the 3 student's cognitive stages:

Planning – effective skill development strategies for reading with understanding are carefully planned by a teacher through a sequence of tasks and activities that embed high-yield strategies allowing students to reach identified reading objectives. How do teachers plan learning experiences to prepare for reading with understanding?

Teaching or facilitation of learning experiences – effective reading skill development strategies are facilitated by the use of high-yield teaching and learning strategies designed to move students toward the attainment of carefully planned reading objectives. How do teachers facilitate meaningful learning experiences that advance student reading skills?

Assessment and feedback – effective reading learning experiences are facilitated by the use of multiple assessment strategies that allow students to demonstrate what they understand and to receive helpful feedback that advances the attainment of higher level reading proficiency. How do teachers and students use performance and feedback to advance student reading skills?

As mentioned before, each phase in turn is relevant to the three cognitive stages of the reading process, ensuring comprehension:

### Stage 1 - Pre-reading activities

Teachers help students to activate prior knowledge and to predict what they will read or hear, they prepare students with appropriate vocabulary or style and motivate them to read the text according to the lesson plan.

Within this stage, the teacher may:

- Motivate students through activities that may increase their interest (book talks, dramatic readings, or displays of art related to the text), making the text relevant to students in some way.
- Activate students' background knowledge important to the content of the text by discussing what students will read and what they already know about its topic and about the text organization.

Students, with some help from the teacher, may:

- Establish a purpose for reading.
- Identify and discuss difficult words, phrases, and concepts in the text.
- Fill out a progressive KWL charts completed in the first and third stage (What I: Know, Want to know, Learned)
- Brainstorm, engage in loop exercises and speed chatting
- Guess from words, from viewing videos or pictures

### Stage 2 - Reading activities

Teachers help students to focus on aspects of the text and to understand it better by confirming predictions, gathering information and organizing the information.

During reading, the teacher may:

- Remind students to use comprehension strategies as they read and to monitor their understanding.
- Ask questions that keep students on track and focus their attention on main ideas and important points in the text.
- Focus attention on parts in a text that require students to make inferences.
- Call on students to summarize key sections or events.
- Encourage students to return to any predictions they have made before reading to see if they are confirmed by the text.

Students, with some help from the teacher, may:

- Determine and summarize important ideas and supportive details.
- Make connections between and among important ideas in the text.
- Integrate new ideas with existing background knowledge.
- Ask themselves questions about the text.

- Sequence events and ideas in the text.
- Offer interpretations of and responses to the text.
- Check understanding by paraphrasing or restating important and/or difficult sentences and paragraphs.
- Visualize characters, settings, or events in a text
- Scanning for information or skimming for gist
- Identifying topic sentences
- Distinguish between general specific ideas
- Code text/margin marking
- Generated questions

**Stage 3 - Post-reading:**

Teachers help students understand texts further, by critically analyzing what they have read.

After reading, the teacher may:

- Guide discussion of the reading.
- Ask students to recall and tell in their own words important parts of the text.
- Offer students opportunities to respond to the reading in various ways, including through writing, dramatic play, music, readers' theater, videos, debate, or pantomime.

Students, with some help from the teacher, may:

- Evaluate and discuss the ideas encountered in the text.
- Apply and extend these ideas to other texts and real life situations.
- Summarize what was read by retelling the main ideas.
- Discuss ideas for further reading.
- Participate in creative discussions and fiction-in-fiction
- Fill graphic organizers or creating concept maps
- Engage in creative writing tasks; different ending of the story, another character, review the book, create a poster to advertise the book, etc.

## III. Evaluation of the skills and communication modes used by the teacher in class

The four types of communication skills are speaking, writing, reading and listening. These four separate language skills are also commonly referred to as the productive and receptive skills. Speaking and

writing are known as the productive skills as they both require some form of language output, while reading and listening are known as the receptive skills.

The factors to keep in mind when designing the activities within stages 1 – 3 are to base them on 2+communication modes and skills.

### a) Modes of communication

In the context of reading we use interpretive, interpersonal and presentational modes:

- The interpretive mode is a one-way communication with no recourse to the active negotiation of meaning with the writer. The students are supposed to listen to, read, or view authentic materials (websites, stories and other literature, articles, signs). They interpret what the author wants the receiver of the message to understand. Interpretation differs from comprehension and translation in that it implies the ability to read "between the lines," including understanding from within the cultural mindset or perspective.
- The interpersonal mode is a two-way communication with active negotiation of meaning among individuals. It is usually spontaneous, it involves exchange of information and is meaningful. Learners observe and monitor one another to see how their meanings and intentions are being communicated and make adjustments and clarifications accordingly. It involves speaking and listening (conversation) or reading and writing (text messages, messages on social media, letters, comments)
- The presentational mode is a one-way communication intended for an audience of readers, listeners, or viewers. It involves presentation of information; not exchange and there is no direct opportunity for the active negotiation of meaning exists. To ensure the intended audience is successful in its interpretation, the "presenter" needs knowledge of the audience's familiarity with the topic. It involves writing (messages, articles, advertisements, flyers, brochures, short stories, reports, scripts, Power Point presentations) or speaking (telling a story, giving a speech, TV or radio news, drama presentations including skits, presentation to jury)

### b) Skills

Speaking, listening, reading, viewing and writing. The four fundamental skills of language learning often work in pairs. When reading or listening, learners consume the language, i.e. they are the receptive skills. However, when writing or speaking, learners produce the language, hence they are the productive skills. During instructions the skills can be combined in sequences from receptive to productive skills as well, e.g. read a sign and discuss it, view or listen to a story and after reading sentences match them with it, etc.

## IV. Evaluation of the achievement of the six competencies

For this assessment purpose, we will use CanDo statements. Generally, Can-Do Statements serve a very useful purpose in guiding teachers and learners in the language learning process. These user-friendly Can-Do statements are developed to assist stakeholders, and in this case teachers, in communicating and assessing what and how well they can perform certain tasks, functions, strategies or activities related to reading comprehension instruction. These statements help develop teachers' capacity for reflection and self- assessment, and enable them to gradually take responsibility in planning, evaluating and monitoring their own professional growth.

These statements are checklists used by teachers to assess what they "can do" in and out of the classroom in the three stages - pre-reading preparation, during reading and post-reading. Can-Do statements provide an important venue for setting professional standards and growth goals to provide teachers the opportunity to take responsibility for their own development. The CanDos are employed to establish positive goals, to serve teachers to monitor their own professionalization experiences and to ensure attainment of selected goals.

Each CanDo is articulated with the 6 student competencies in mind appropriate for the cognitive level of the target students, namely:

To understand the meaning of idioms, sentences and paragraphs and to be able to establish connections between different parts of the text

- To be able to evaluate the text, which is being read; to get an understanding of the author's ideas and feelings
- To be able to make a connection between the information in the text and previous experience and knowledge
- To understand the main idea of the text
- To understand ideas, which are not directly expressed by the author; to understand the subtext
- To evaluate the text in terms of accuracy and value of information.

# Assessment tool

The present Assessment tool will be used to measure the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process of professionals who teach reading comprehension to children whose mother tongue is different from the official language of the country. It will demonstrate if the participants in the process are meeting their educational goals. The tool will also inform on teacher training needs and will thus promote their professional growth through education, reflection and dialogue.

It addresses the entire process needed for evaluation of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process of the above professionals at the school level, including their culturally responsive and inclusive attitudes and practices.

The project team has tentatively developed samples of observation checklists and sample activities where the strategies and skills are embedded. This component is informed by research which has indicated that observation is a valid form of professional development. The observation forms are an important tool to effective teacher observation. It helps to establish the expectations vis-a-vis the teacher's practices in and outside of the classroom. When they are clear, they objectively anchor the dialogue between the observer and the teacher before and after the observation. Thus, the teacher understands how to use and benefit from the process.

In addition, the form outlines the purpose for teacher observation by selecting certain specific strategies and skills to be in the focus of the observation session. They are clearly articulated in the form and when the teacher who will be observed has access to it a-priori, it reinforces or validates certain practices they implement already or directs their attention towards areas of improvement.

One of the recommended approaches to initiate the new observation initiative is by inviting teachers to first participate in the process as volunteers. It is up to the individual institution, its administration and the teaching staff to decide how to sequence the observation sessions and how many to conduct.

The Tool provides opportunity to perform a comprehensive assessment at three interrelated levels that complement each other and encompass the entire process:

1. 1Instruments for monitoring of teachers' work by school principals, school inspectors, researchers, trainers and other professionals who are responsible for the effectiveness of teaching process and teachers' qualifications, support and attestation
2. Peer-to-peer observation and support between teachers
3. Self-evaluation of the teachers at any time and whenever necessary.

The three levels correspond to Part A and Part B of the tool, as described below.

Part A, Appendixes from A to D) is directed to evaluate teachers' success and performance according to the following layers:

### A.1. Reflecting quality of teaching by evaluation of the learner outcomes and growth

Evaluating the learner outcomes and growth is a valuable method for reflecting on the quality of teaching. By assessing how well students are achieving their educational goals and measuring their progress over time, educators can gain insights into the effectiveness of the teaching strategies and make informed decisions to enhance the learning experience and success.

The Class Observation Checklist (Appendix A) is a tool to be used by teachers providing information on how well the teacher guides the students to understand and use reading comprehension strategies.

# Appendix A

Teacher Observation Checklist for Reading Comprehension Strategies

Date:

| Student Name | Predicting | Making Connections | Inferring | Questioning | Visualizing | Summarizing |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

NOTE: Teacher will use this checklist to observe students' ability to use these comprehension strategies.

+ Student is able to use this strategy.

- Student is having difficulty using this strategy.

# Appendix B

The Metacomprehension Strategy questionnaires (Appendix B - 1-3) is a tool administered to students by teachers in their own classrooms. Students reflect on and self-report on their awareness of the strategic reading processes. The Metacomprehension Strategy Index is administered pre-lesson to check basic learner awareness or post-lesson to measure specific strategy awareness. Also, it can be administered both pre- and post-lesson demonstration to gather data ascertaining the growth of students' awareness of strategic reading processes as a result of reading comprehension strategy use and instruction.

## Appendix B.1 : Metacomprehension Strategy Index

Student Name_____

Part I Directions: Listen carefully as I read each statement and the 4 choices. Circle the one choice which tells a good thing to do to help yourself understand a story better before you read it.

1. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. See how many pages are in the story.

B. Look up all the big words in the dictionary.

C. Make some guesses about what I think will happen in the story.

D. Think about what has happened so far in the story.

2. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Look at the pictures to see what the story is about.

B. Decide how long it will take me to read the story.

C. Sound out the words I don't know.

D. Check to see if the story is making sense.

3. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Ask someone to read the story to me.

B. Read the title to see what the story is about.

C. Check to see if most of the words have long or short vowels in them.

D. Check to see if the pictures are in order and make sense.

4. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Check to see that no pages are missing.

B. Make a list of the words I'm not sure about.

C. Use the title and pictures to help me make guesses about what will happen in the story.

D. Read the last sentence so I will know how the story ends.

5. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Decide on why I am going to read the story.

B. Use the difficult words to help me make guesses about what will happen in the story.

C. Reread some parts to see if I can figure out what is happening if things aren't making sense.

D. Ask for help with the difficult words.

6. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Retell the main points that have happened so far.

B. Ask myself questions that I would like to have answered in the story.

C. Think about the meanings of the words which have more than one meaning.

D. Look through the story to find all the words with 3 or more syllables.

7. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Check to see if I have read the story before.

B. Use my questions and guesses as a reason for reading the story.

C. Make sure I can pronounce all the words before I start.

D. Think of a better title for the story.

8. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Think of what I already know about the things I see in the pictures.

B. See how many pages are in the story.

C. Choose the best part of the story to read again.

D. Read the story aloud to someone.

9. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Practice reading the story aloud.

B. Retell all of the main points to make sure I can remember the story.

C. Think about where the story might be taking place.

D. Decide if I have enough time to read the story.

10. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:

E. Check to see if I am understanding the story so far.

F. Check to see if the words have more than one meaning.

G. Think about where the story might be taking place.

H. List all of the important details.

## Appendix B.2 - Metacomprehension Strategy Index

Student Name_____

Part II Directions: Listen carefully as I read each statement and the 4 choices. Circle the one choice which tells a good thing to do to help yourself understand a story better while you are reading it.

11. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Read the story very slowly so that I will not miss any important part.

B. Read the title to see what the story is about.

C. Check to see if the pictures have anything missing.

D. Check to see if the story is making sense by seeing if I can tell what's happened so far.

12. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Stop to retell the main points to see if I am understanding what has happened so far.

B. Read the title to see what the story is about.

C. Read only the beginning and the end of the story to find out what it is all about.

D. Skip the parts that are too difficult for me.

13. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Look all of the big words up in the dictionary.

B. Put the book away and find another one if things aren't making sense.

C. Keep thinking about the title and the pictures to help me decide what is going to happen next.

D. Keep track of how many pages I have left to read.

14. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Keep track of how long it is taking me to read the story.

B. Check to see if I can answer any of the questions I asked before I started reading.

C. Read the title to see what the story is going to be about.

D. Add the missing detail to the pictures.

15. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Have someone read the story aloud to me.

B. Keep track of how many pages I have read.

C. List the story's main character.

D. Check to see if my guesses are right or wrong.

16. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Check to see that the characters are real.

B. Make a lot of guesses about what is going to happen next.

C. Not look at the pictures because they might confuse me.

D. Read the story aloud to someone.

17. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Try to answer the questions I asked myself.

B. Try not to confuse what I already know with what I'm reading about.

C. Read the story silently.

D. Check to see if I am saying the new vocabulary words correctly.

18. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Try to see if my guesses are going to be right or wrong.

B. Reread to be sure I haven't missed any of the words.

C. Decide on why I am reading the story.

D. List what happened first, second, third, and so on.

19. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. See if I can recognize the new vocabulary words.

B. Be careful not to skip any parts of the story.

C. Check to see how many of the words I already knew.

D. Keep thinking of what I already know about the things and ideas in the story to help me decide what is going to happen.

20. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:

A. Reread some parts or read ahead to see if I can figure out what is happening if things aren't making sense.

B. Take my time reading so that I can be sure I understand what is happening.

C. Change the ending so that it makes sense.

D. Check to see if there are enough pictures to help make the story ideas clear.

### Appendix B.3. Metacomprehension Strategy Index

Student Name_____

Part III Directions: Listen carefully as I read each statement and the 4 choices. Circle the one choice which tells a good thing to do to help yourself understand a story better after you have read it.

21. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:

A. Count how many pages I read with no mistakes.

B. Check to see if there were enough pictures to go with the story to make it interesting.

C. Check to see if I met my purpose for reading the story.

D. Underline the causes and effects.

22. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:

A. Underline the main idea.

B. Retell the main points of the whole story so that I can check to see if I understood it.

C. Read the story again to be sure I said all of the words right.

D. Practice reading the story aloud.

23. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:

A. Read the title and look over the story to see what it is about.

B. Check to see if I skipped any of the vocabulary words.

C. Think about what made me make good or bad predictions.

D. Make a guess about what will happen next in the story.

24. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:

A. Look up all of the big words in the dictionary.

B. Read the best parts aloud.

C. Have someone read the story aloud to me.

D. Think about how the story was like things I already knew about before I started reading.

25. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:

A. Think about how I would have acted if I were the main character in the story.

B. Practice reading the story silently for practice of good reading.

C. Look over the story title and pictures to see what will happen.

D. Make a list of the things I understood the most.

Adapted from: Schmitt, M.C. (1990). A questionnaire to measure children's awareness of strategic reading processes. The Reading Teacher, 43,454-461.

### A.2. Assessment of the level of teachers 'professional skills and knowledge

Reflects the level of teachers' professional skills and knowledge with focus on identifying existing knowledge and skills, effective practices, strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers to identify qualification gaps based on the above but also provide feedback and make recommendations for specific trainings

They can be complementary to the usual practices for teacher's work assessment and provide concrete recommendations for additional or further training based on identified gaps.

# Appendix C

Classroom Observation Form: Reading Comprehension

Note: This framework is a general one and represents an array of strategies. All of the strategies do not have to be used with every text or in every reading situation.

## The teacher:

| Preparation | Agree | Disagree | Evidence | Not observed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Identifies the specific reading strategies according to the lesson/learning path goals. | | | | |
| Selects appropriate level text that will give students opportunities to practice. | | | | |
| Develops a lesson plan with a sequence of activities defining clear educational goals | | | | |
| **BEFORE READING (5 min)** | Agree | Disagree | Evidence | Not Observed |
| Introduces the text (quick gist statement). | | | | |
| Names the reading strategy (makes it specific)<br>- models strategy<br>- explains strategy and give an example guides practice | | | | |
| Motivates students through activities that increase their interest (book talks, dramatic readings, or displays of art related to the text), making the text relevant to students in some way. | | | | |
| Activates students' background knowledge important to the content of the text by discussing what students will read and what they already know about its topic and about the text organization. | | | | |

| Preparation | Agree | Disagree | Evidence | Not observed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Addresses potential challenges in text (vocab, concepts, format/structure)<br>- 1-2<br>- shows in context of text<br>demonstrates how to gather clues about these words | | | | |
| Previews the text (students survey the title, illustrations, and unusual text structures) to make predictions about its content. | | | | |
| Prompts students to think, talk and write about the topic of the text (starting KWL chart) | | | | |
| **DURING READING (10-12 mins.)** | Agree | Disagree | Evidence | Not Observed |
| Reminds students to use comprehension strategies as they read by modeling. | | | | |
| Focuses attention on parts in a text that require students to make inferences. | | | | |
| Asks a mix of questions:<br>- factual<br>- inferential<br>- critical<br>to keep students on track and focus their attention on main ideas and important points in the text. | | | | |
| Calls on students to summarize key sections or events. | | | | |
| Encourages students to return to any predictions they have made before reading to see if they are confirmed by the text. | | | | |

| Preparation | Agree | Disagree | Evidence | Not observed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asks students to determine and summarize important ideas and supportive details. | | | | |
| Asks students to make connections between and among important ideas in the text. | | | | |
| Prompts students to integrate new ideas with existing background knowledge. | | | | |
| Tasks students to ask and answer questions themselves about the text. | | | | |
| Helps students visualize characters, settings, or events in a text. | | | | |
| Checks for understanding by asking students to paraphrase or restate important and/or difficult sentences and paragraphs. | | | | |
| Asks students to make interpretations of and responses to the text. | | | | |
| Diagnoses/Follows-up on confusion and creates opportunities to follow up on anything observed during reading. | | | | |
| AFTER READING | Agree | Disagree | Evidence | Not Observed |
| Begins a comprehension conversation and guides discussion of the reading with targeted question(s). | | | | |
| Asks students to recall, tell in their own words important parts of the text and do deep retell. | | | | |

| Preparation | Agree | Disagree | Evidence | Not observed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Offers students opportunities to respond to the reading in various ways, including through writing, dramatic play, music, readers' theater, videos, debate, or pantomime. | | | | |
| Guides the students to evaluate and discuss the ideas encountered in the text. | | | | |
| Provides opportunities for students to apply and extend these ideas to other texts and/or real life situations. | | | | |
| Tasks the students to summarize what was read by retelling the main ideas and discuss ideas for further reading. | | | | |

### A.3. Observation of teachers' individual qualities and skills for inclusive classroom management and working in a multicultural environment (evaluated through case studies or teacher portfolios).

It checks if the teacher uses an instructional approach that demonstrates a commitment to equity and provides instruction (support) and classroom strategies (interventions and programming) that result in culturally inclusive and responsive learning environments and high academic achievement for all students.

### The tool is based on the following Standards of Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Teaching:

Cultural Proficiency and Inclusivity: In order to understand their students, teachers must understand their own identities. It includes acknowledging that their life experiences, values, assumptions, and identity influence the way they see the world around them. Understanding their own culture is essential to the effectively teaching of their students who may have a different cultural and other background. In addition, understanding that diversity has many dimensions (e.g., ethnic, socioeconomic, racial, gender, sexual orientation, disability, cultural differences, etc.) and that individuals have unique experiences given their intersectionality along these dimensions is indispensable to an engaging and student-centered class environment. Finally, it is necessary for teachers to understand the challenges faced by underrepresented and marginalized individuals, and the need for all students, school administrators and teachers to work to identify and eliminate barriers to their full and equitable participation and advancement.

Developing and Maintaining Student Relationships: If teachers start the school year by building a responsive and inclusive classroom community and understanding who their students are, where they come from, and how they learn, they can begin to build trusting relationships – a condition for higher

achievements. The teacher can then leverage students' cultural and other identities when creating units and curricula that reflect learners' abilities and interests. Consequently, teachers will begin demonstrating inclusivity, cultural caring and building a strong learning community.

Knowledge Construction: Teachers explore the aspects of culture (its products, practices and perspectives) and how they impact and frame the brain. Teachers should design diverse teaching materials meaningful and equally accessible to all students having in mind the diversity and equity principles. When they prompt students to think about how they think and learn, it helps build neuroplasticity and creates more neural pathways. It is important for students to activate their prior knowledge, or schema, so that they can begin making connections and creating new knowledge. By understanding students' cultures and experiences, teachers develop skills to use cultural scaffolding and help students achieve higher standards.

Differentiated Assessments: Making the connection between strong learning partnerships and effective use of culturally sensitive assessments leads to closing the learning gaps. Also, teachers gain an understanding of how to use a variety of instructional and formative assessment strategies to meet the needs of a diverse group of students in a mixed abilities classroom. Teacher's understanding of student assessment in light of inclusive education promotes inclusivity in assessment. All assessment procedures should aim to take into full account and also celebrate diversity by identifying and valuing all students' individual learning progress and achievements

**General Criteria of the culturally responsive educators:**

1. See cultural differences as classroom assets.
2. Recognize the inequities impacting students' lives.
3. Utilize students' cultural and other backgrounds as vehicles for learning.
4. Cultivate relationships beyond the classroom anchored in affirmation, mutual respect, and validation.
5. Believe that ALL students can succeed and communicate high expectations for ALL students.
6. Engage in reflection of their beliefs, behaviors, and practices.
7. Design diverse assessments to focus on learning and teaching practices that promote inclusion and growth.
8. Understands racial, socio-economic, ethnic, gender and cultural differences and challenges to avoid stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and other forms of intolerance, injustice, exclusion and oppression based on these differences.
9. Mediate power imbalances in classrooms based on race, culture, ethnicity, gender, and class.

# Appendix D

Observation of culturally responsive and inclusive teaching is a tool for principals and administrators to note culturally-responsive behaviors and attitudes that are aligned with the inclusivity, equity and diversity principles.

| **The teacher implements culturally responsive and inclusive strategies in class:** | **Consistently** | **Occasionally** | **Evidence** | **Not observed** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Utilizes an inclusive curriculum and instructional resources that represent and validate diverse cultural experiences. | | | | |
| Selects texts that enable students to make personal connections between their cultural backgrounds and the content being taught. | | | | |
| Designs teaching materials and/or selects texts and instruments that promote not only knowledge but also core values aligned with the principles of diversity, inclusivity and equity. | | | | |
| Provides age- and level-appropriate comprehensible input in order for all students to be able to understand teacher explanations, modeling and instructions. | | | | |
| Provides equal opportunities through diverse activities and facilitates equitable participation of all students based on their strengths and abilities. | | | | |

| **The teacher implements culturally responsive and inclusive strategies in class:** | **Consistently** | **Occasionally** | **Evidence** | **Not observed** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inspires all students' active engagement to build a learner-centered environment. | | | | |
| Designs assessment taking into full account the students' diverse learning progress and achievements. | | | | |
| Provides culturally-sensitive positive feedback (non-punitive and non-judgemental) to ensure individual growth and success. | | | | |
| **The teacher communicates with family and community** | Consistently | Occasionally | Evidence | Not Observed |
| Uses appropriate communication channels for regular communication with the families. | | | | |
| Elicits parents' or guardians' opinions and feedback about the classroom environment and the effectiveness of culturally responsive and inclusive practices. | | | | |
| Creates numerous opportunities for all families to participate in and/or observe school events, sessions and workshops. | | | | |
| Seeks to build bridges and establishes collaborations with diverse community organizations at all levels. | | | | |

**Note:** The project recommends that all tools be used for peer-observation by other teachers. These peer-observations support collaborative teacher development to take place in their institution. Peer-observations reduce top-down pressure and stress of the individual teachers. They increase the sense

of collective responsibility and motivation to participate, thus, resulting in bottom-up professional community building and team growth.

## B. Teachers' self assessment instrument

The Self-Assessment Card (Appendix E) is a tool for teachers specifically targeting their self-evaluation of their skills in designing activities facilitating reading comprehension. The main objective of such cards is to organize a list of effective practices related to the area of reading comprehension. They are articulated in general CanDo statements for the teachers to check, which will help them evaluate their own instructional strategies and thus identify their needs for professional development in relation to these practices. The results of this type of teacher self-assessment will inform trainers about areas of confidence among the teachers and their needs for improvement. Based on the descriptors of the assessment tool the self-assessment card is to be used by teachers who provide examples for each checked CanDo statement (Appendix D)

**Appendix E. For each of the CanDos the teacher provides specific examples and documentation from their own practice:**

| Reading Stages | Planning | Teaching | Assessment | Examples from practice: |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-Reading | I can design several pre-reading activities based on 2+ modes and to help students predict.<br><br>I can design several pre-reading activities engaging 2+ skills to prepare all students for the topic/content. | I can implement pre-reading activities and adjust them to the needs and level of the students to ensure understanding.<br><br>I can engage students with visuals, video or script to encourage them to share with each other what they think they know or want to know (KWL chart). | I can elicit and diagnoze students' prior knowledge or experience to help them relate with the text.<br><br>I can provide positive feedback and support students working on pre-reading tasks to motivate them to read later. | |
| During Reading | I can create tasks based on 2+ skills to support understanding while reading.<br><br>I can design diverse activities based on 2+ modes to support understanding while reading. | I can facilitate activities while reading to promote active understanding and sharing in a think-pair-share format.<br><br>I create multiple opportunities for my students to demonstrate understanding and refine their output based on a variety of peer and instructor feedback. | I meaningfully engage my students in pair and/or small group activities to base my formative assessment.<br><br>I frequently check for understanding in a variety of ways throughout the reading session. | |

| Reading Stages | Planning | Teaching | Assessment | Examples from practice: |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Post-Reading | I can develop numerous prompts to encourage student output as evidence for understanding based on 2+ modes.<br><br>I can plan various opportunities that include student choice as to how they demonstrate understanding | I can create learning experiences that encourage my students to be creative while demonstrating what they have learned.<br><br>I can create learning experiences that engage my students in different levels of thinking (remembering, applying, analyzing, evaluating, creating). | I can offer opportunities for students to monitor and reflect on their understanding of varied aspects of the text.<br><br>I can modify the reading strategies to meet or exceed the reading performance targets based on assessment and feedback from my students. | |

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