

Introduction to Assessment and Evaluation

Introduction to Assessment and Evaluation in Primary Education

(A concise, reader-friendly guide for teachers, trainees, and education students)

1. Why Assess & Evaluate?

Purpose	What It Looks Like in the Classroom	Key Benefit
Diagnose learning needs	Pre-tests, entry-tickets, informal observations	Spot gaps early; plan targeted support
Guide instruction	Ongoing quizzes, formative tasks, “thinking-out-loud”	Adjust pacing, differentiate activities
Motivate learners	Self-assessment rubrics, goal-setting charts	Boost confidence & ownership
Provide accountability	Summative exams, portfolio reviews	Show progress to parents, school leaders, policymakers
Inform curriculum development	Aggregated data, trend analysis	Refine units, allocate resources

2. Core Concepts

Term	Definition	Typical Examples (Primary)
Assessment	The process of gathering evidence about a child’s knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviours.	Observation checklists, oral questioning, hands-on tasks
Evaluation	The judgment or interpretation made from assessment data, often linked to standards or goals.	Grading a math test, rating a writing rubric, summarising portfolio outcomes
Formative Assessment	Low-stakes, frequent checks that inform teaching while learning is happening.	Exit tickets, peer-feedback, mini-whiteboard quizzes
Summative Assessment	High-stakes, usually at the end of a unit/term to judge overall achievement.	End-of-term test, final project, standardized test

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Diagnostic Assessment	Conducted before instruction to identify prior knowledge and misconceptions.	Pre-unit concept map, "what do you know?" questionnaire
Criterion-Referenced	Measures performance against a fixed set of criteria or learning outcomes.	Rubric for a science experiment aligned to curriculum standards
Norm-Referenced	Compares a learner's performance to that of a peer group.	Standardized reading fluency percentile
Authentic Assessment	Tasks that reflect real-world applications of knowledge.	Creating a class newspaper, budgeting a mock shop
Portfolio Assessment	A curated collection of student work showing growth over time.	Writing samples from Term 1-4, math problem-solving logs

3. Principles of Good Assessment (Primary Focus)

1. **Validity** – The task measures what it intends to (e.g., a counting test truly assesses number sense).
2. **Reliability** – Results are consistent across time, observers, and contexts.
3. **Fairness** – No bias related to language, culture, gender, or ability.
4. **Transparency** – Children know what is expected and how they will be judged.
5. **Actionability** – Data leads to concrete next steps for teaching or learning.
6. **Age-appropriateness** – Length, language, and format suit the developmental stage.

4. The Assessment Cycle (Step-by-Step)

1. **Set Clear Learning Objectives**
 - Align with national curriculum and grade-level standards.
2. **Choose Assessment Types**
 - Mix formative, summative, diagnostic, and authentic tasks.
3. **Design or Select Instruments**
 - Rubrics, checklists, observation sheets, digital quizzes.
4. **Administer & Collect Evidence**
 - Ensure a supportive environment; give clear instructions.
5. **Analyse Data**

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- Quick visual checks (e.g., bar graph of class scores) ? deeper