

ASSESSING READING



[Reading Comprehension: 5' 57'']

If you need to assess your students' reading skills, there are a number of factors you need to consider. These include considering the test-taker and their needs, the kind of information you want to know about their reading skills and the most appropriate ways to assess these skills, so that your test is appropriate and accurately scored. Therefore, text selection and task choice for reading tests need to vary accordingly.

A. BEFORE YOU WATCH

Note: These first three questions are meant to help you prepare for the video and relate it to your context. There are no "correct" answers.

1. **Do you think that people read less today than in the past? What about students?**

People today still read quite a lot, although they do not do the same type of reading our parents did.

2. **Why do people need to read?**

- *General information*
- *Instructions*
- *Pleasure*

3. **What texts do people read in real life? From what sources?**

Texts: novels, magazines, notes.

Sources: e-books, tablets, phone screens, computers etc...

B. WHILE YOU WATCH

4. **What three basic processes are normally used to create meaning from a text? Complete the statements.**

Setting goals *depending on our purpose*

Recognizing *individual words*

Using our understanding of *the grammar of the language*

5. **Different ways of reading are related to our purpose for reading**

We read *quickly* if we want to get a general idea or find specific information.

We read *(very) carefully* to get a thorough understanding.

6. **What are the characteristics of a good reading test task? Tick from the list below.**

✓ *Relevant*

Extensive

✓ *Meaningful*

✓ *Authentic*

Intensive

7. **Which common characteristics do good pencil and paper and computer-based tests share?**

A suitable combination of *texts* and *tasks*.

8. **On text selection**

Select texts on the basis of their *(level of) difficulty* and *length*.

Questions should be answered with information in the text and not with test takers' *background* knowledge.

Texts should not cause *offence* to any group of test takers.

9. On task development

A reading test needs to include a variety of different tasks. Complete the list with task types mentioned in the video.

Choose the correct answers to questions (Multiple Choice, True/False,...) ,

- choose a sentence which summarises text
- complete a text with words removed
- give short written answers to questions
- understand information presented in graphic form

Reading into Writing

10. Test developers need to check carefully a number of things before a test is administered live. Match column 1 and 2 to complete the Reading test checklist.

1	2
sufficient	<i>time</i>
clear	<i>instructions</i>
no	<i>ambiguous questions</i>
valid and efficient	<i>scoring</i>

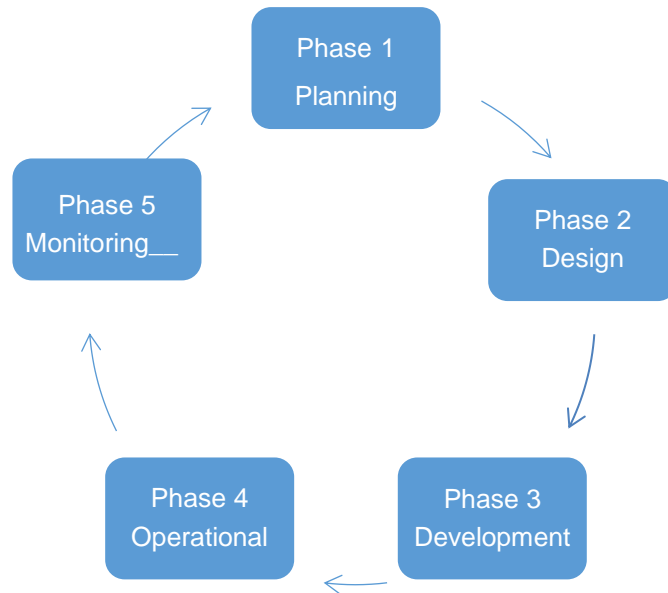
C. AFTER YOU WATCH

11. Examine critically the last reading test you have administered. First complete the test as a student would do. Then reflect on the test and check:

- the clarity of the instructions
- the time allowed
- the adequacy of the scoring
- whether the questions in the different tasks are straightforward.

What would you change? Why?

12. The video mentions that when developing a reading test **work, time, experience** and – above all – a lot of **common sense** are needed. Think of the five phases in the video on Test Development and consider what you would do in your context in each of the five phases in the development of a reading test.



To learn more about issues to consider when developing a test of reading, you may access Appendix C in the APTIS General Technical Manual (pp. 44–47)

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/aptis_general_technical_manual_v-1.0.pdf