

TEST DEVELOPMENT



[Test Development: 6' 29'']

The process of test development includes different steps and different phases. Quality is important both for major tests and for classroom tests. In order to contribute to learning, any test needs to provide teachers and learners with reliable and useful information. This video will help you understand what quality means in test development and the importance of test specifications.

A. BEFORE YOU WATCH

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

1. **What international tests do you know? Have you ever heard about IELTS or TOEFL?**
Cambridge, Trinity College London, Pearson etc...
2. **Do you use published practice materials from international tests in your classroom?**
3. **Do you develop your own tests? Do you find it easy or difficult? Why?**

B. WHILE YOU WATCH

Quality and test development

4. Quality is important to achieve **reliable** and **useful** test results.

5. Which two decisions need to be made before starting to develop a test?
 1. *Why you need a test?*
 2. *What type of test is it going to be?*

6. Match the Test Development Phase with the definitions in the description column in the table, which are NOT in order (e.g. 1 - D)

Phase	Description
1. Planning	<i>D. Identify potential candidates</i>
2. Design	<i>E. Writing specifications, deciding on test features and topics, production of sample materials</i>
3. Development	<i>A. Trial of the materials developed, collection of feedback, introduction of changes.</i>
4. Operational	<i>C. Construction and administration of a complete test.</i>
5. Monitoring	<i>B. Live test performance analysed. Revision of materials and update.</i>

7. The video compares the development of **classroom tests** to the development of major **international tests**. State which aspects are the same or different in the two different assessment contexts.

The video says that test development processes need to be approached in a similar way, but with some differences because of context of use.

Stages *Same*

Content *Different*

Timing/Planning *Different – different classes may need different tests, and schedules are often determined by the employer*

Format *Different*

Reporting *Different*

The importance of Test Specifications

8a. What should you include in your Class Profile?

- *personal information (age/class level)*
- *knowledge of the topic*
- *background knowledge*
- *language strengths and weaknesses*

8b. The video mentions a number of characteristics to include in Test Specifications. Which would you include in the Specifications for a test in your context?

Characteristics	YES / NO
Purpose of the test	
Skills and language elements to test	
Time constraints	
Sections (how many, length)	
Methods in each section (Multiple choice/T-F...)	
How many items? All count equal?	

Different answers to this task are possible, depending on the context where you work and the needs and background of your students.

8c. What is the main purpose of test specifications?

To make it possible to write a similar test later.

Operational issues

9. Write down the issues to monitor in relation to test administration and test analysis.

A. Administration

- *timing*
- *clarity of instructions*

B. Post test Analysis

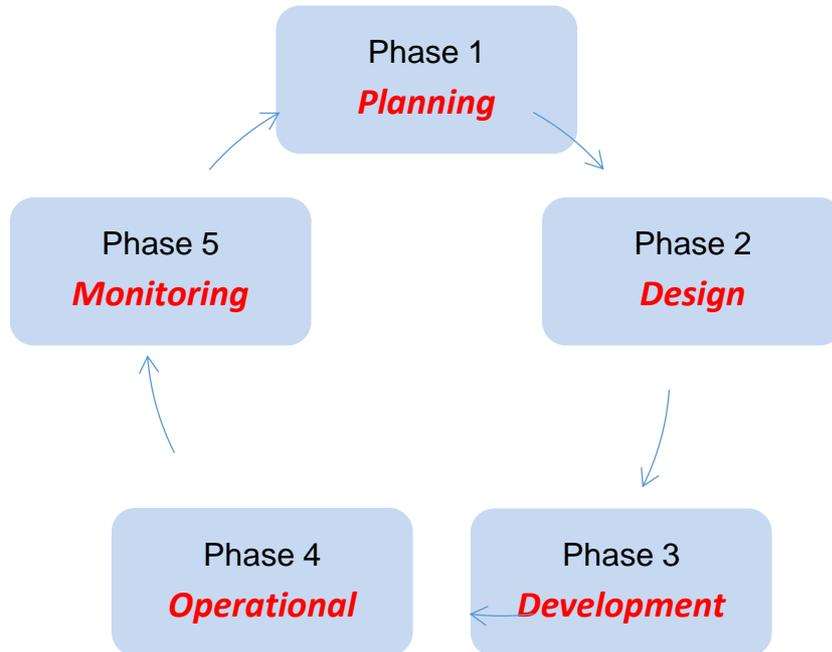
- *no question is too easy or too difficult*
- *review all stages (test content, specifications and administration)*

10. Why is review and monitoring important?

Because then the test can be part of a test bank which can be used again and again.

C. AFTER YOU WATCH

11. **Summary:** This diagram illustrates the Test Cycle Phases described in the video and in Activity 6 in this worksheet. Write the corresponding labels for each Phase.



12. **Action planning:** Think about one of your classes. Which ideas from this video would you like to try next time you prepare a test for that class?

Some suggestions:

- *Write test specifications*
- *Check adequacy of instructions and time during administration*
- *Take notes of students' questions and difficulties during the test*
- *Make sure that there are no questions that are too easy or too difficult*

To learn more, you can access:

The British Council Aptis General Technical Manual

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

The ALTE-Council of Europe Manual for Developing Tests and Examining, which provides a comprehensive description of the test development process

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/ManualLanguageTest-Alte2011_EN.pdf