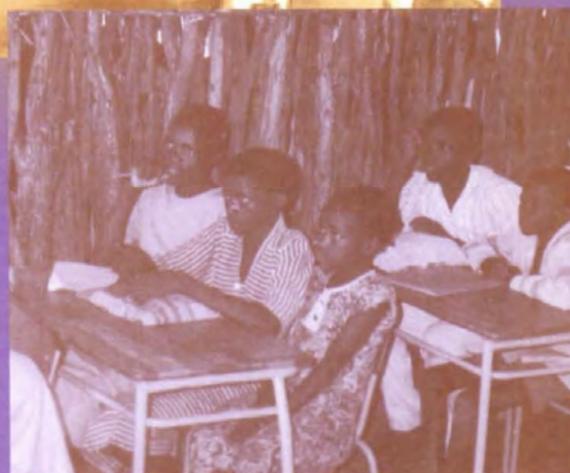




## INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME

**Modules for Namibian Teachers in Training**

English Version - Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama and Rukwangali available

**Continuous  
assessment  
Part 2**

**This pilot edition of the TEACHERS' BASIC COMPETENCIES MANUAL was produced for the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, Republic of Namibia with assistance from the United States Agency for International Development through the Institute for International Research, Basic Education Support Project.**

# Teachers Basic Competencies Manual

## Module 5

# Continuous assessment Part 2

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Basic Education Support Project

National Institute for Educational Development  
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1996

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Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (January 1996) *Pilot Curriculum Guide for Formal Basic Education*.

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Mark Lynd  
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Basic Education Support Project  
Okahandja, 1996

# HOW TO USE THIS MODULE

This module is part of a series of 20 modules designed for you, the Namibian teacher teaching Grades 1 through 4. The series is designed to help you become a better teacher.

As you read through each module, you will discover four symbols which mark activities or suggestions for you to follow. They are:



## Question Box

These boxes ask you questions based on what you have read in the module. They are intended to help you learn as you are reading. *Answer these questions by yourself as you read the module.*



## Activity Box

These boxes suggest activities for you to try. The box will give you instructions. *You may try these activities as you read the module or after you complete it.* After completing each activity box, you should always discuss what you have learned with another teacher, your principal, or your ORP.



## Self Test

This test gives you a chance to recall key ideas in the module and to determine how well you have understood them. It comes at the end of the module. *Take the test by yourself when you have finished the module.* Then check your answers with the Answers to Self Test on the following page. If you like, you can review the Self Test with your ORP, another teacher, or your principal.



## Tips

Tips are provided as suggestions for refining the skills you have learned in the module.

This module also contains four additional items to help you learn:

## **wall charts**

These pages summarize important module content in graphic form. Refer to them when you are planning lessons or discussing teaching ideas with other teachers or your principal.

## **summary at the end of the module**

This page is designed to review the main points of the module. Review these points before taking the Self Test.

## **glossary**

This section provides definitions for all the new and important words and phrases presented in the module.

## **page titled MY NOTES at the end of the module**

Keep your own notes here. Also, make notes in the margins throughout the module. It is yours to mark up and to make your own.

If you have any suggestions for improving the content or format of these modules, please contact your ORP or send your comments to the BES Target School Intervention Coordinator at Ongwediva Teachers' Resource Centre, Ongwediva, at the following address:

P.O. Box 2156, Oshakati

telephone and fax: 06751-30670

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# INTRODUCTION

In Module 4 we discussed different types of assessment, from observation to formal assessment. We said that formal assessment, or the use of exams, is not permitted in grades 1-4 in Namibia. We also said that informal continuous assessment can mean observing the whole child inside and outside of the classroom, and recording what we see. If we observe a child achieving a competency today, we tick that competency in our assessment book.

With informal continuous assessment, we can also observe children in a more formal or structured way. That is, we can set up assessment situations, or activities designed specifically to allow us to assess the learner. These activities are not exams, but small exercises through which we can assess our learners' progress **as we teach**. We will call this **informal continuous assessment: more structured**. It is more structured because we are setting up, or structuring, assessment situations. **Informal continuous assessment: less structured** means observing and recording a learner's performance **as we teach**. This is the kind of assessment we discussed in Module 4. In this module, we will discuss how to set up assessment situations, and how to keep reliable records of our learners' achievement.

# OBJECTIVES

After reading and using this module you will be able to:

- ✓ describe how to set up written and oral assessment situations
- ✓ design and administer at least three different types of quizzes
- ✓ calculate scores accurately
- ✓ design activities for slow and fast learners

## WHAT IS AN ASSESSMENT SITUATION?

In Module 4 we said that whenever you observe an event and make a judgment about its status or success, you are assessing. For example, you are teaching one day, and you notice a child holding a pencil correctly for the first time. Based on this observation, you put a tick or mark in your assessment book to show that the learner has achieved that competency. This is **informal continuous assessment: less structured**. If the learner has difficulties or needs to be challenged more, you assign follow-up exercises and continue to monitor the learner as new information is presented.

With **informal continuous assessment: more structured**, we do much the same thing **except** we also set up assessment situations.

**What is an assessment situation?** An **assessment situation** is an activity we organize in order to assess certain competencies in our learners. So if the competency is "holding the pencil correctly," we can ask our learners to write a story with their pencils. We can then walk around and observe each learner, provide assistance as necessary, and give each learner a tick, symbol or mark in our book. This is an assessment situation. We can also put a tick or mark next to *other* competencies we observe; this would be informal continuous assessment: less structured. **FROM HERE ON OUT, WE WILL REFER TO INFORMAL CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT: MORE STRUCTURED AS SETTING UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS.**

**Why do we set up assessment situations?** We set up assessment situations to ensure that we have a *complete* picture of our learners' achievements. We also set up assessment situations to help us understand our learners' areas of strength and difficulty. Since we observe our learners every day, we already know much about their strengths and problems. Since we do informal continuous assessment, we should already have some ticks, symbols or marks in our assessment books. But we might not have an opportunity to observe *all* important competency areas **informally**. Therefore, we must set up assessment

situations in order to ensure that we have a complete picture of learners' areas of strength and difficulty.

**How do we set up assessment situations?** The first step is to identify the competencies we wish to assess. In this module, we will discuss seven steps:

- Step 1: Identify competencies to be assessed.
- Step 2: Set up assessment situations.
- Step 3: Conduct assessments.
- Step 4: Score assessments.
- Step 5: Identify fast and slow learners.
- Step 6: Develop appropriate activities for your fast and slow learners.
- Step 7: Conduct follow-up activities.

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|--|
| 1. IDENTIFY COMPETENCIES TO BE ASSESSED                  |
| 2. SET UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS                          |
| 3. CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS                                   |
| 4. SCORE ASSESSMENTS                                     |
| 5. IDENTIFY STRONG AND WEAK LEARNERS                     |
| 6. DEVELOP ACTIVITIES FOR STRONGEST AND WEAKEST LEARNERS |
| 7. CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES                          |

**Step #1: Identify competencies we need to assess.** How do we identify competencies to be assessed?

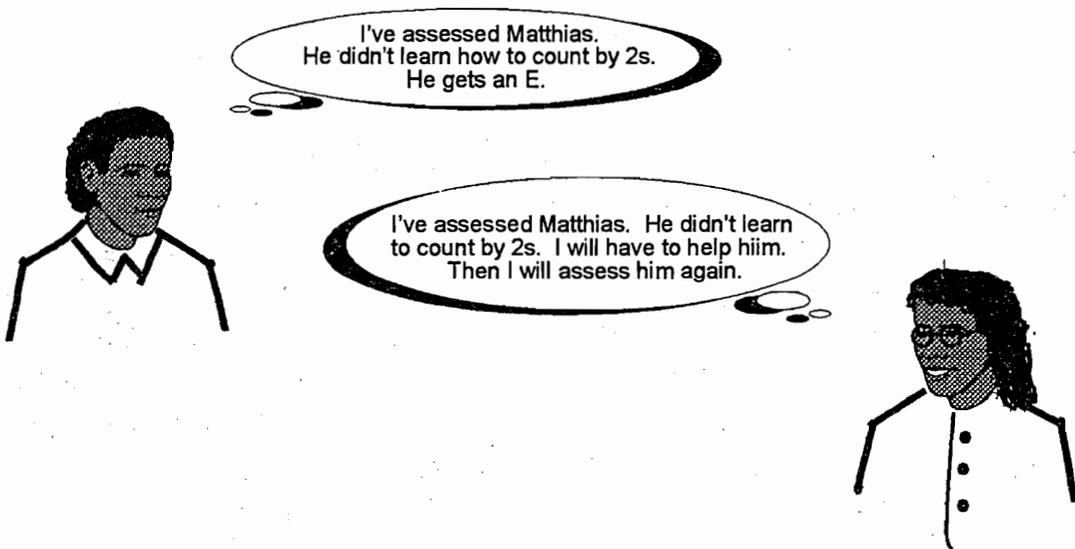
First, we should decide which competencies *need* to be assessed.

Because we have also been doing **informal continuous assessment: less structured**, we should already have some ticks in our assessment book. Therefore, we should focus on the competencies for which we have *no* ticks, or for which only *some* learners have achieved competencies.

John still has no ticks for counting by 2s. I must sit down with him and see if he can do it.



Second, we should decide which competencies we are **ready** to assess. **REMEMBER: TEACH FIRST, THEN ASSESS.** Let's say we have been teaching Maths grade 2. During the first term of school, we have taught how to count in multiples of 2 to 50 (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, etc.). Through informal continuous assessment, we have observed some learners doing this in groups, and have put a tick next to their names. However, it is now the end of the term and some learners have not yet achieved this competency. Because we have taught them how to count in 2s, and they have had several opportunities to practise, we can set up an assessment situation for them. For example, we can ask learners to count in multiples of 2 orally or in writing.



Finally, we should decide **when** a learner should achieve a competency. If a learner cannot count by 2s by the end of term 1, does this mean he/she will never learn it? **NO!** We should continue to observe the learner throughout the year, and set up similar assessment situations later. Why? Because not all learners learn at the same pace, or in the same order. Some will learn a new idea as soon as you present it; others might take days, weeks or longer. This is natural. We don't always know why learners learn as they do. What is important is that we present things clearly, give learners time to practice, and continue to observe them as they are able to finally understand it (or not). If after repeated efforts the learner still does not achieve the competency, we should

diagnose the learner and give him/her consolidation activities (see Module 18: Learning Problems and Consolidation Activities).

|  |
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| 1. IDENTIFY COMPETENCIES TO BE ASSESSED                  |
| 2. SET UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS                          |
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| 7. CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES                          |

**Step #2: Set up assessment situations.** Once we have identified the competencies we will assess, we must design an activity that will enable us to observe learners using that competency. This is called an

assessment situation. Examples of assessment situations include:

- **Maths:** asking learners to come to the chalkboard and perform problems in addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division
- **English or Mother Tongue:** observing learners in small group discussions as they use new grammar or vocabulary words you have taught them.
- **English or Mother Tongue:** asking learners to write a story or paragraph based on an idea discussed in class.
- **Environmental Studies:** writing quiz (short exam) questions about the parts of a plant on the chalkboard and asking learners to answer them on a piece of paper, then hand them in.
- **School Readiness:** Call individual learners to the table and flash colour cards to see if learners know their colours.
- **Any subject:** assigning homework which our learners give us the next day (grade 2-4) **Note:** Sometimes learners do homework with their parents. Therefore, give learners a tick for competencies achieved in homework. Do not give them marks or symbols for homework because this is unfair to the learners whose parents do not help them.

In general, there are three kinds of assessment situations we can create: written assignments, oral assignments, and creative assignments.

**Written assignments** In grades 1 and 2, most assessment situations should be oral. However, as our learners learn to read and write, we can give them short written assignments to assess their knowledge. There are three kinds of written assignments: quizzes, worksheets, and board work. (You can also do some of these assignments orally.)

- **Quizzes** A quiz is a short test. Quizzes usually consist of 5 to 10 questions, never more than 20. Quizzes are usually structured so that the learner has limited responses from which to answer. We will

discuss five main kinds of quizzes: true/false, multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, and question and answer.

**Note:** Quizzes are **small** tests given **regularly** to assess **one new piece of information**, not information presented over a whole term or several weeks.

**True/False** quizzes ask learners to answer “true” or “false” after reading a series of statements. Often, the learner must circle T or F. For example,

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| In Namibia, it usually rains during summer. | T | F |
| Oshakati is the capital of Namibia.         | T | F |

**Multiple Choice** quizzes ask the learner to choose from several options. Often, the learner must write a letter, or circle it. For example,

|                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| $81 \div 9 = \underline{\quad}$ | a. 8  |
|                                 | b. 9  |
|                                 | c. 11 |

|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| A <u>    </u> is a domestic animal. | a. kudu     |
|                                     | b. cow      |
|                                     | c. hornbill |

**Matching** quizzes are similar to multiple choice because they provide the learner with several options. However, with matching, the learner must match items from one list with items from another. For example,

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| <u>    </u> milk    | a. maize meal       |
| <u>    </u> wheat   | b. butter or cheese |
| <u>    </u> mealies | c. flower or bread  |

**Note:** You can also ask learners to connect the answers with lines instead of using letters. In lower grades, learners can connect answers with sticks or bottle tops.

**Fill in the Blank** quizzes ask the learner to provide missing words or phrases. For example,

1. Yesterday, I \_\_\_\_\_ to the store.
2. The three main body parts of an insect are the head, thorax and \_\_\_\_\_.

To make fill in the blank quizzes easier, you can provide the learner with a list of possible words. Also, with question #1, you could provide the learner with a word that you want him/her to change - e.g., Yesterday, I (to go) to the store.

**Note:** As we discuss in Module 8: Teaching Large and Multi-Level Classes, two other teaching activities which can be used for assessment purposes are the cloze test and dictation. With the cloze test, words in a text are erased in a pattern (e.g., every seventh word). The learner must then fill in the words. With dictation, you read a text to the learners as they write it word for word.

**Question and answer** quizzes are more difficult because the answer is not provided. "Q and A quizzes" can use closed questions or open-ended questions. With closed questions, there is only one correct answer:

- Which event does Christmas celebrate?
- What are the colours of the Namibian flag?

A closed question can also be in the form of a problem to solve:

$$4 \times 8 =$$
$$5 + 6 =$$

With open-ended questions, more than one answer is possible. With these questions, the learner must usually provide some of his/her own ideas as well:

- How does your family celebrate Christmas?
- What other colours could be added to the Namibian flag?
- Why?

**Note:** With opinion questions like the second one, you must ask why. The learner must be able to explain why.

**Note:** You can also use the structure of written quizzes to assess your learners orally. For example, you can ask them to answer true/false, fill in the blank, or open-ended questions verbally.



## Activity Box

Select one type of quiz and construct a quiz for your learners. They can take the quiz in writing or orally. Ask your ORP to review the questions with you. Later, we will ask you to give the quiz to your learners.

- **Worksheets** A worksheet is an assignment that can be presented either on the chalkboard or on a prepared piece of paper. Worksheets are used to *reinforce* something the learner has learned, not to teach it. With worksheets, the learner *practices* what has been learned, or *applies* what has been learned. Worksheets can be used for the second or third part of the three Ps: presentation, **practice** and **performance** (see Module 2: Lesson Planning). For example, after you have presented a lesson on personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, we, they), you can ask the learners to finish the following sentences:

1. My name is John. \_\_\_ am John.
2. Alice, Dutte and I will come. \_\_\_ will come. etc.

**Note:** You can make your worksheets the same way you made your quizzes. For example, the structure can be fill in the blank, question and answer, etc. What, then, is the difference between worksheets and quizzes? You give quizzes at a specific time in class for all learners to take. You can give worksheets as part of a lesson, or as homework.

- **Board work** Like worksheets, you can use the chalkboard to set up assessment situations. However, with board work, the learner is asked to come to the chalkboard and perform the task there. Also

like worksheets, assessments on the chalkboard can be structured like quizzes: question and answer, fill in the blank, etc.



## Question Box

A teacher once asked a learner to do a problem at the chalkboard. Then the teacher gave the learner a symbol based on his performance. The learner got angry. Why?

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With all types of quizzes, if you are giving a score (not a tick), you should inform your learners that they will be taking a quiz. You should also tell them what the content will be, when it will occur, and how they will be expected to take it (on the board, at their seats, for homework, etc.). If you don't tell them, and you give them a mark or symbol, they will feel betrayed. **EVERYONE WANTS TO KNOW WHEN HE/SHE IS BEING ASSESSED.**

**Oral assignments** In addition to written assessments, we can assess our learners orally (verbally). We will discuss four kinds of oral assessment: strategic conversations, role plays, group discussions, and class presentations.

- **Strategic conversations** are discussions you have with your learners in order to assess specific kinds of knowledge. Strategic conversations are like question and answer quizzes, except that they consist of several questions to be asked of one learner on the same topic, like a conversation. Also, they assess a learner's knowledge in a context. For example:

What are you wearing? Who cleans your shirt? etc.  
(vocabulary)

What did you do today before you came to school? What did you do next? etc. (grammar)  
How are you today? Oh, and how do you feel? etc. (functions)

You can also use strategic conversations to assess the learner's higher order thinking skills:

Can you describe the life cycle of a cow? (comprehension)  
What would you do if you had an elephant for a pet? (synthesis)



**Remember:** The purpose of strategic conversations, as with all types of assessment, is to discover what our learners know, not to fault them for what they do not know. You are like a miner digging for diamonds. You are digging for precious knowledge inside your learners' minds and hearts.

- **Role plays** are "small dramas" in which two or more learners play the part of someone else - for example, a store owner and a customer. Like strategic conversations, role plays enable the learner to demonstrate his/her ability to use vocabulary, grammar structures, or certain language functions in a context. Role plays can also be useful in assessing learners' understanding of scientific concepts - for example, a reporter from the Namibian interviewing a cattle disease expert.



- **Group discussions** are like role plays because they give learners the opportunity to use their knowledge in a context, and to use their higher order thinking skills. Unlike role plays, however, learners express their own ideas in group discussions, not the ideas of another character. For example, you might ask your learners these questions:

What materials should we use to build a house?

How many bricks should we use to build a room 3 metres wide by 3 metres long by 2 metres tall? (for this problem, you must tell your learners the number of bricks per square metre.)

What kinds of things should we eat in order to stay healthy?

- **Class presentations** also offer learners the opportunity to use their knowledge in a context, and to use their higher order thinking skills. Class presentations can be set up by:
  - ✓ asking learners to have group discussions, then report to the class as a group
  - ✓ asking learners to work in groups to present special reports - e.g., how oshanas form
  - ✓ asking individual learners to prepare a presentation on a subject of their choice

**Note:** Written assignments are effective when we want to assess our learners' memory, or their ability to use language. However, if we want to develop and assess higher order thinking skills, oral assessment is more effective in grades 1-4.

**Note:** Oral assessments are more difficult to conduct because we must usually assess one learner at a time, which is time consuming. Thus, it is not as efficient as written assessments.

**Creative assignments** If we want to develop and assess our learners' higher order thinking skills (e.g., application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation), creative assignments are the most effective type of activity we can use. Creative assignments are also good for developing affective skills such as expression of feelings, attitudes and values. We will discuss four kinds of creative assignments: drawing, story writing,

expository writing and persuasive writing. (These writing assignments should be used in grades 3 and 4 only.)

- **Drawing** You can ask your learners to draw things they have learned such as circles and squares (knowledge). You can then ask them to use circles and squares to draw a house (application). You can ask them to draw a picture that represents how they feel about conservation (affective skills), then explain it to the class (evaluation).

**Variation:** Ask learners to bring a photo or drawing of themselves, and put it at the top of the page. Then, write about themselves.

- **Story writing** You can ask your learners to write a simple story using new vocabulary words or new grammar structures (application). You can ask your learners to make up a story about a boy who became sick, and how he got well again (application). You can ask your learners to write maths story problems - e.g., "Once there were three people walking to Oshakati. One hitched a ride," etc. (application, synthesis).

**Variation:** If your learners have difficulty writing a story, you can do this exercise with them. Ask one learner to give you a sentence, then write it on the chalkboard. Everyone claps. Then another learner gives another sentence, etc. up to five sentences. This can also be the basis for a reading lesson. You can also revise words and ideas with this technique.

- **Expository writing** With expository writing, the learner explains how something works, or how something came to be. You can ask your learners to write about:
  - ✓ what they did on Christmas day
  - ✓ how their bodies produce heat
  - ✓ how we can use metal, wood, or plastic in our daily lives



## Activity Box

Prepare and present one of the creative assignments you haven't tried before. Ask your ORP to observe you. What did you learn?

|  |
|--|
| 1. IDENTIFY COMPETENCIES TO BE ASSESSED                  |
| 2. SET UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS                          |
| <b>3. CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS</b>                            |
| 4. SCORE ASSESSMENTS                                     |
| 5. IDENTIFY STRONG AND WEAK LEARNERS                     |
| 6. DEVELOP ACTIVITIES FOR STRONGEST AND WEAKEST LEARNERS |
| 7. CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES                          |

### Step #3: Conduct assessments.

In order to give a quiz, you should be sure to tell your learners that they will be taking a quiz, teach them how to take the quiz, give clear instructions, and administer the quiz fairly.

- **Tell your learners that they will be taking a quiz.** As we have said, learners should know when they will be assessed, the content of the assessment, and the manner in which they will be assessed: matching, multiple choice, fill in the blank, etc.
- **Teach your learners how to take a quiz.** Taking quizzes is a cultural practice like eating a meal. We must learn how to use a fork, and when. Similarly, learners must learn how to answer quiz questions correctly, and within a certain period of time. You can:
  - ✓ Review the material for the quiz in advance.
  - ✓ Hold a practice quiz by putting a model quiz on the chalkboard in the format of the quiz to be taken (e.g., multiple choice) and discuss it with your learners.
  - ✓ Teach your learners how to manage their time. If they take too much time on one question, they might not finish the quiz.
  - ✓ Teach strategies. For example, on some types of quizzes, they can eliminate answers based on the ones they already know.
- **Give clear instructions.** Ensure that your learners know what to do:
  - ✓ if they have any questions
  - ✓ when they are finished taking the quiz
  - ✓ if they run out of paper
  - ✓ if they need another pencil

- ✓ if they run out of time
  - ✓ if they get caught cheating
- **Administer the quiz fairly.** Once you have told your learners the rules for taking the quiz, ensure that you follow them in the same manner for everybody. In particular, rules for cheating should be enforced consistently. If you tell your learners that they will get one chance, then all learners must get one chance.



## Question Box

What measures do you take to prepare your learners for a quiz? Are any different from the ones discussed above?

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1. IDENTIFY COMPETENCIES TO BE ASSESSED
2. SET UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS
3. CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS
4. SCORE ASSESSMENTS
5. IDENTIFY STRONG AND WEAK LEARNERS
6. DEVELOP ACTIVITIES FOR STRONGEST AND WEAKEST LEARNERS
7. CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

**Step #4: Score the assessments.**  
When a learner achieves a competency, there are three ways you can score it: with ticks, with symbols, and with marks.

- **Ticks** indicate whether a learner has achieved the competency or not. A tick indicates that a learner's performance is satisfactory. For example, in the School Readiness syllabus, many of the competencies can be ticked when achieved:
  - ✓ knowing name and surname
  - ✓ naming main parts of the body
  - ✓ counting out 5 objects
  - ✓ remembering events in a sequence
  - ✓ performing a series of 3 instructions with ease

While we could give the learner a mark or symbol for these competencies, a tick should be sufficient. We want to know if the learner's performance is satisfactory. If it is, we can give them a tick, then focus on other competencies.

However, with some competencies, we might want to know *how well* the learner has achieved the competency. For example, we might want to assess how well a learner:

- ✓ completes a set of maths problems (how well? with 50% accuracy? 80%?)
- ✓ gives directions to a store in English (well? poorly?)
- ✓ explains how a plant germinates (clearly? completely?)

For these types of competencies, we wish to measure **levels of achievement** - for example, 75%, or the symbol "B."

- **Symbols** are letters assigned to different levels of achievement. In Namibia, symbols indicate the following levels of achievement (see page 27 for a complete description of each symbol):

|   |  |
|---|--|
| A | Achieved basic competencies exceptionally well.  |
| B | Achieved basic competencies very well.           |
| C | Achieved basic competencies.                     |
| D | Partly achieved basic competencies.              |
| E | Not achieved the majority of basic competencies. |

**Note:** In grades 1-3, we can put symbols or marks in our assessment books, but not on learners' papers or work. We can begin putting them on learners' papers beginning in grade 4. However, we should make corrections on our learners' papers from grade 1 on, so they can learn from their mistakes.

- **Marks** are numbers assigned to different levels of achievement. Marks can be raw scores (e.g., 15 answers correct out of 20), or percentages (e.g., 75%). **Raw scores** are the *actual number* of items answered correctly - e.g., if a learner scores 15 correct on a quiz of 20 items, his/her raw score is 15. A percentage is different from a raw score because 15/20 is 75%, not 15.

## Formulas for calculating marks

- **To derive percentages**, divide the learner's raw score by the total number possible. For example, if you give a quiz with 15 items on it, and a learner gets 12 correct, divide the learner's score (12) by the total number possible (15):

$$12 \div 15 = .8, \text{ or } 80\%$$

- **To convert decimals into percentages**, move the decimal two places to the right and add a % sign.

$$.75 = 75\%$$

$$.10 = 10\%$$

If there is only one place to move the decimal, then add a zero.

$$.9 = .90 = 90\%$$

$$.04 = 4\%$$

- **To convert a fraction to a percentage**, first divide the numerator by the denominator,

$$\frac{3}{4} = 3 \div 4 = .75$$

then move the decimal points two places to the right and add a % sign.

$$.75 = 75\%$$

- **To derive an average**, first add all the scores:

$$15 + 13 + 11 = 39$$

then divide by the number of scores:

$$39 \div 3 = 13$$

The average for these three quiz scores is 13.



## Question Box

Can you convert this average (13) to a percentage?  
Why or why not?

No, you cannot convert this score to a percentage because you need to know the ***total number possible*** in order to do this.

- **To convert percentages to symbols**, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture has established percentage equivalents for each symbol. Symbols can also be represented numerically, from 1-5:

|   |   |              |   |   |
|---|---|--------------|---|---|
| A | = | 80% or above | = | 5 |
| B | = | 66-79%       | = | 4 |
| C | = | 40-65%       | = | 3 |
| D | = | 30-39%       | = | 2 |
| E | = | 0-29%        | = | 1 |



## Activity Box

Calculate the average score for each learner in this example. You can do this by converting symbols into points, then averaging the points: A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1. Learner 1 is completed as an example. (Answers on page 29.) Do this exercise with your ORP.

|            | Quiz 1/<br>points | Quiz 2/<br>points | Quiz 3/<br>points | Total<br>points | Average<br>(total<br>points ÷ 3) | Symbol |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--------|
| Learner 1  | B = 4             | A = 5             | B = 4             | 13              | 4,3                              | B      |
| Learner 2  | D                 | C                 | -                 |                 |                                  |        |
| Learner 3  | B                 | C                 | B                 |                 |                                  |        |
| Learner 4  | A                 | C                 | B                 |                 |                                  |        |
| Learner 5  | B                 | C                 | C                 |                 |                                  |        |
| Learner 6  | C                 | D                 | C                 |                 |                                  |        |
| Learner 7  | E                 | D                 | C                 |                 |                                  |        |
| Learner 8  | A                 | B                 | A                 |                 |                                  |        |
| Learner 9  | C                 | D                 | B                 |                 |                                  |        |
| Learner 10 | C                 | E                 | C                 |                 |                                  |        |

### STANDARDIZE YOUR SCORES!

Whatever method of scoring you use, you must **standardize** your scores. For example, if you use all **raw scores**, ensure that all scores are based on quizzes of the same size - e.g., all quizzes in a term have 10 items. If you use a symbol on one quiz, use symbols on all quizzes throughout the term. Or, you can **convert** one standard to another - for example, you can convert marks to symbols, or symbols to marks, so in the end, all scores are the same standard - all symbols, or all marks. **DO NOT MIX PERCENTAGES WITH RAW SCORES.**

Let's take an example. You have given 3 quizzes, each with a different number of items, or points. John's scores are 6, 8 and 15.

|        | Quiz 1: 10 points | Quiz 2: 15 points | Quiz 3: 20 points |
|--------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Wrong: | 6                 | 8                 | 15                |
| Wrong: | 6                 | 53%               | 15                |
| Wrong: | 6                 | C                 | 15                |
| Right: | 60%               | 53%               | 75%               |
| Right: | B                 | C                 | B                 |
| Right: | B                 | 53% = C           | B                 |

1. IDENTIFY COMPETENCIES TO BE ASSESSED
2. SET UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS
3. CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS
4. SCORE ASSESSMENTS
- 5. IDENTIFY STRONG AND WEAK LEARNERS**
6. DEVELOP ACTIVITIES FOR STRONGEST AND WEAKEST LEARNERS
7. CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

**Step #5: Identify fast and slow learners.** Once we have given a number of quizzes and scored them properly, we are ready to identify our fast and slow learners. After the first month or two of school, you should

have a number of ticks, and two, three or four scores from quizzes **for each learner**. (For grade 1, they will only have ticks.) This information is extremely valuable because it enables you to see who is doing well and who is not **before too much time goes by**. At this time, you want to decide two things: Which learners are having the greatest difficulties? and Which learners are learning the fastest? Here is an easy way to make these determinations: Identify which **five** learners are achieving the

most poorly. Also, identify which **five** learners are learning the best. This is based on the ticks they have received, and their scores to date.

**Note:** NEVER directly call a learner fast or slow. These terms are for your reference only!



## Question Box

In the activity box on the page 17, which two learners scored the highest? Which two scored the lowest?

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1. IDENTIFY COMPETENCIES TO BE ASSESSED
2. SET UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS
3. CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS
4. SCORE ASSESSMENTS
5. IDENTIFY STRONG AND WEAK LEARNERS
- 6. DEVELOP ACTIVITIES FOR STRONGEST AND WEAKEST LEARNERS**
7. CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

**Step #6: Develop appropriate activities for your fast and slow learners.** In Module 18, we discuss ways to diagnose learning problems, and how to provide consolidation activities for them. Here, we will briefly

discuss characteristics of slow and fast learners, and what kinds of activities we can design for them.

- **Characteristics of slow learners** Slow learners typically have the following characteristics:
  - ✓ They often have difficulty reading and writing.
  - ✓ They often have difficulty understanding things in verbal form, though their spelling skills can be quite good.
  - ✓ They often understand things better if they can see them, hear them, or do them actively.
  - ✓ They often have difficulty focusing on a single topic. They become easily distracted by details that are not essential.

- ✓ They often have difficulty with study skills such as note taking and listening.
- **Consolidation activities** For our slow learners, you can try the following consolidation activities:
  - ✓ **Develop lessons around your learners' interests, needs and experiences.** Try to use examples from their lives. Try to incorporate subjects that are important to them into class activities.
  - ✓ **Vary your instructional technique.** Ensure that you frequently change from lecture to group work to seat work.
  - ✓ **Use individualized learning materials.** Make materials just for your slow learners. The materials should focus on the areas in which learners need the most help.
  - ✓ **Use audio and visual materials.** To the greatest extent possible, plan class activities to include teaching aids. Provide music, rhythmic exercises (e.g., clapping in time with speech) as much as possible.
  - ✓ **Provide peer tutors.** Find other learners who can assist your slow learners - preferably their friends. Design short activities that they can do together.
  - ✓ **Encourage oral expression instead of written assignments.** Whenever possible, assess your learners verbally. Ask them to participate verbally in class - for example, when reporting from group work.
  - ✓ **Help learners prepare for quizzes.** Discuss the main points of the quiz with slow learners. Practice taking the quiz with them.
  - ✓ **Teach study skills.** Teach note taking and listening skills (grades 3 and 4).

**Note:** After using consolidation activities, assess slow learners again. Even if most of the class has moved forward, give a quiz to include competencies not yet achieved by slow learners. (This can be a revision for learners who already achieved the competencies.)



## Activity Box

Identify one or two slow learners in your class. Try to determine what their difficulties are, and design an activity for them based on the checklist above. Discuss the activity with your ORP. Then, try the activity with the learner. What did you learn?

- **Characteristics of fast learners** Fast learners typically have the following characteristics:
  - ✓ They often learn well from other people, and in groups.
  - ✓ They are often verbally fluent.
  - ✓ They are often able to see connections between ideas.
  - ✓ They often produce novel and imaginative interpretations.
  - ✓ They often desire to work more quickly and independently.
  - ✓ They are often comfortable using higher order thinking skills (see Module 13 for a description of these skills.)
- **Enrichment activities** For these learners, you can try the following enrichment activities:
  - ✓ **Give learners freedom.** Provide assignments that help them explore topics in depth on their own. Find topics that fit their interest and experience - e.g., art projects, collecting things for nature corners, reading materials in reading corners, making picture dominoes related to the subject or lesson.
  - ✓ **Use group activities.** Use activities like brainstorming sessions, group discussions, and working in teams. (**Brainstorming** is a technique in which a group of learners develops a list of ideas *without limiting themselves*. For example, you might ask your learners to brainstorm all the words they know that begin with the letter A.)
  - ✓ **Use problem-solving activities.** Provide additional assignments that are challenging. Give fast learners more problem-solving activities. Pose challenging problems: "How could we start a garden in our school?"
  - ✓ **Ask more higher order questions.** Though you try to ask these kinds of questions of all learners, fast learners should be asked more higher order questions.

- ✓ **Be prepared to provide additional exercises** when they finish. This way, they won't get bored while other learners are still working.



## Activity Box

As you did with your slow learners, identify one or two fast learners in your class. Design an activity for them based on the checklist above. Discuss the activity with your ORP. Then, try the activity with the learner. What did you learn?

1. IDENTIFY COMPETENCIES TO BE ASSESSED
2. SET UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS
3. CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS
4. SCORE ASSESSMENTS
5. IDENTIFY STRONG AND WEAK LEARNERS
6. DEVELOP ACTIVITIES FOR STRONGEST AND WEAKEST LEARNERS
7. CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

### Step #7: Conduct follow-up activities

Let's imagine you have assessed your learners. You have analysed their progress and difficulties. You have given them consolidation and enrichment activities. Are you

finished? No! You must continue to monitor their progress as the school year passes, and provide appropriate activities for them. Are some learners improving as a result of your consolidation or enrichment activities? Are some learners having more difficulties than before? What can you do? Here we will discuss two additional ideas: revising your teaching, and organising parent conferences.

- **Revise your teaching.** As we said in Module 3, after we assess learner achievement, we can do one of two things: help our learner, or change our instruction. Maybe our learners are failing because of the way we are teaching. Even if we provide excellent consolidation and enrichment activities, some learners may not improve. In this case, we must examine how we are teaching them. This must be done on a case-by-case basis. When a learner is having difficulty, we must observe him/her closely: How does this learner learn best - in groups or individually? Through lectures or activities? Through speaking or writing? Which concepts does the learner already understand? We should build on these concepts, and teach in a manner that helps the

learner learn. THIS USUALLY MEANS THAT WE MUST SPEND EXTRA TIME WITH OUR LEARNERS AFTER SCHOOL OR BETWEEN CLASSES.

- **Hold learner and parent conferences.** Finally, all types of assessment require that we continuously inform our learners of their progress, and that we inform their parents as well. We should meet with our learners individually at least once a term, and meet with their parents at least once a year. If learners are having difficulties, we should meet with parents twice per year - at the end of the 1st and 2nd terms. We should tell the parents what we are observing, and ask if they are aware of the problems we are finding.

When parents come to the school, put a mark in your assessment book indicating when the parents came. You can also give a record of these visits to the principal. This way, if a parent does **not** come, and his/her child fails at the end of the year, you can show the parent your record that he/she did not come.



We should ask the parents about home conditions, and try to discover elements of the home environment that will help the learner learn. For example, does the learner have an hour or so per day to do homework? Does the learner talk to the parents about what he/she learned each day? Can the parents be included in the learner's work - for example, interviews in which the learner asks the parents, brothers or sisters questions for a language or maths assignment:

- Who are your parents? Where do they live? What do they do for work? (language)
- When were you born? When was your brother born? How old were you when he was born? (Maths)

Most importantly, the parents should know about their child's progress and problems, so they can be of assistance in any way possible.

## SUMMARY

1. Formal continuous assessment is a type of assessment in which we set up assessment situations in order to assess our learners' achievement of competencies.
2. There are seven steps for conducting formal continuous assessment:
  - 1: Identify competencies to be assessed.
  - 2: Set up assessment situations.
  - 3: Conduct assessments.
  - 4: Score assessments.
  - 5: Identify fast and slow learners.
  - 6: Develop appropriate activities for fast and slow learners.
  - 7: Conduct follow-up activities.
3. When identifying competencies to be assessed, we should determine which competencies need to be assessed, which competencies we are ready to assess, and when we should assess.
4. We can set up many kinds of assessment situations: written assignments, oral assignments, and creative assignments. The most common type of written assessment is the quiz, or short test. However, most assessment in grades 1 and 2 should be conducted orally, until our learners are able to read and write.
5. When we conduct assessments, we should ensure that we tell our learners they will be taking a quiz, we teach them how to take a quiz, we give clear instructions, and we administer the quiz fairly.
6. When scoring the assessments, we can use ticks, symbols or marks. We should always use the same standard to calculate our scores. If quizzes have different numbers of questions, we should never calculate using raw scores.

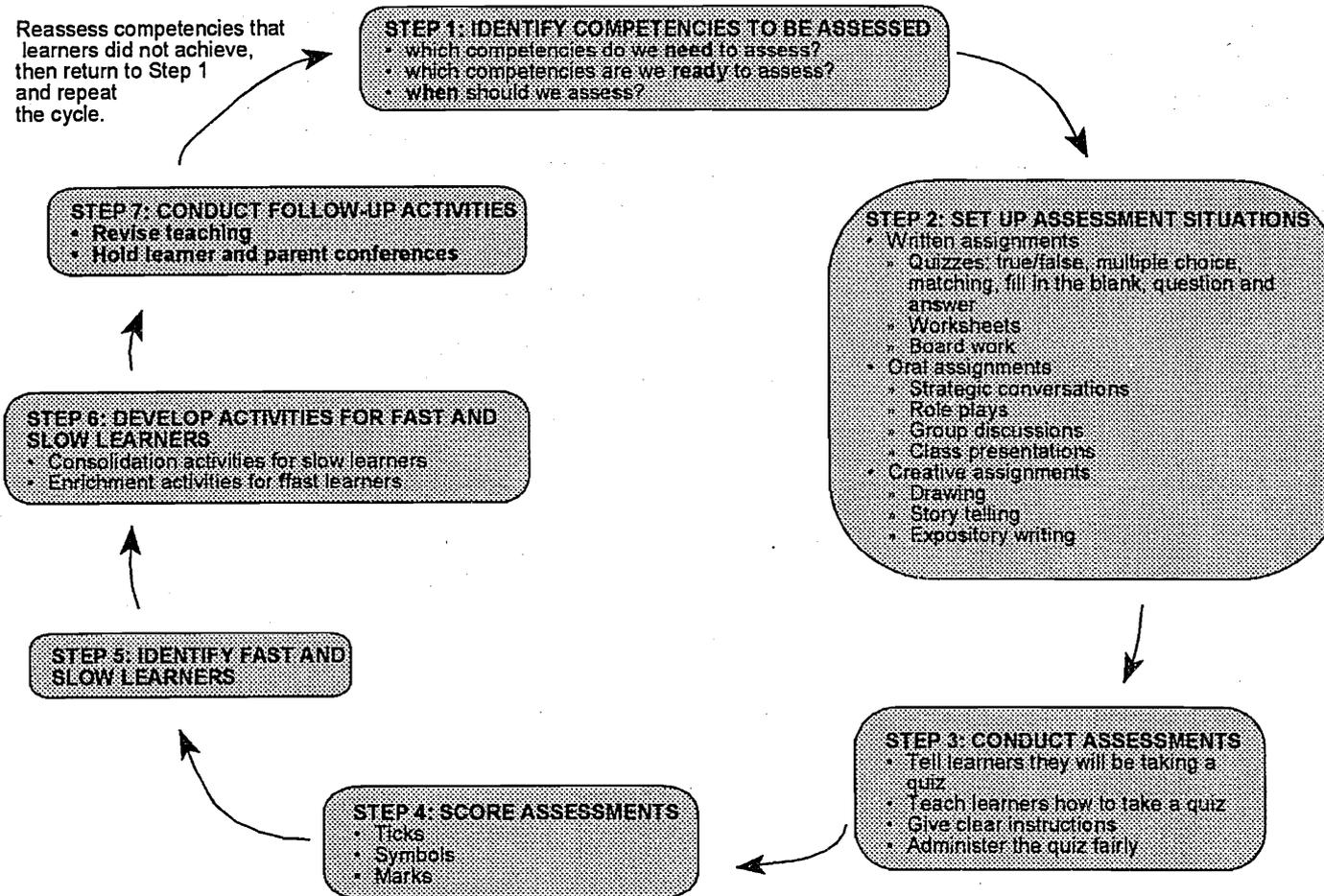
7. As the school year progresses, we should identify our slow learners and devise consolidation activities for them. We should also identify our fast learners and devise enrichment activities for them.
8. Assessment is never complete. As we get more information about our learners, we should discuss it with them and with their parents in order to help them learn better.



You have just finished Module 5: Continuous Assessment, Part 2 - Informal Continuous Assessment: More Structured. We encourage you to experiment with the different ideas in this module throughout the school year in order to determine which techniques work best for you. And remember: your main purpose in assessing is to discover what your learners know, so you can build on their knowledge and help them learn what they do not know. Assessment is a way of helping your learners learn!

If you have finished reading this module, turn to page 28 and take the Self-Test.

# SETTING UP ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS: SEVEN STEPS



# MINISTRY OF BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

## GRADING SYSTEM AND EQUIVALENTS

| GRADE | DEFINITION                                       | DESCRIPTION  | POINTS | PERCENTAGE   |
|-------|--|--|--------|--------------|
| A     | Achieved basic competencies exceptionally well.  | The learner is outstanding in the class in all main areas of competency.   | 5      | 80% or above |
| B     | Achieved basic competencies very well.           | The learner is above average in the class, and is more proficient than average in several areas - e.g., showing quicker mastery of some competencies, or being able to apply competencies to unknown situations or contexts, or showing new insight. | 4      | 66-79%       |
| C     | Achieved basic competencies.                     | The learner has mastered the competencies satisfactorily in known situations and contexts. The large majority of learners should reach this level.   | 3      | 40-65%       |
| D     | Partly achieved basic competencies.              | The learner may not have achieved all the competencies, or may sometimes need help, but has sufficient competency to go on to the next grade.  | 2      | 30-39%       |
| E     | Not achieved the majority of basic competencies. | The learner has not been able to reach a minimum level of competency for the activity or period, even with extensive help from the teacher and is in need of compensatory teaching.  | 1      | 0-29%        |

*Source: Pilot Curriculum Guide for Formal Basic Education, Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, January 1996*



## Self Test

1. What is informal continuous assessment: more structured?
2. What are three types of written assignments we can use to assess our learners?
3. What are three types of oral assignments we can use to assess our learners?
4. What are three types of creative assignments we can use to assess our learners?

## ANSWERS TO SELF-TEST

1. **Informal continuous assessment: more structured** is a type of assessment in which we set up assessment situations in order to assess whether learners have achieved certain competencies.  
(2 points possible)
2. Examples of written assignments are: quizzes, work sheets, and board work. Types of quizzes include true/false, multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, and question and answer.  
(6 points possible, 2 for each correct answer)
3. Examples of oral assignments include: strategic conversations, role plays, group discussions, and class presentations.  
(6 points possible, 2 for each correct answer)
4. Examples of creative assignments include: drawing, story writing, expository writing, and persuasive writing.  
(6 points possible, 2 for each correct answer)

Total 20 points possible

Answers to question box on page 17:

|            | Quiz 1/<br>points | Quiz 2/<br>points | Quiz 3/<br>points | Total<br>points | Average (total<br>points ÷ 3) | Symbol |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| Learner 1  | B = 4             | A = 5             | B = 4             | 13              | 4,3                           | B      |
| Learner 2  | D = 2             | C = 3             | -                 | 5               | ,15                           | E      |
| Learner 3  | B = 4             | C = 3             | B = 4             | 11              | 3,6                           | B      |
| Learner 4  | A = 5             | C = 3             | B = 4             | 12              | 4                             | B      |
| Learner 5  | B = 4             | C = 3             | C = 3             | 10              | 3,3                           | C      |
| Learner 6  | C = 3             | D = 2             | C = 3             | 8               | 2,6                           | C      |
| Learner 7  | E = 1             | D = 2             | C = 3             | 6               | 2                             | D      |
| Learner 8  | A = 5             | B = 4             | A = 5             | 14              | 4,6                           | A      |
| Learner 9  | C = 3             | D = 2             | B = 4             | 9               | 3                             | C      |
| Learner 10 | C = 3             | E = 1             | C = 3             | 7               | 2,3                           | D      |

## GLOSSARY

**assessment situation:** an activity we organize in order to assess certain competencies in our learners. We can use written assignments such as quizzes, oral assignments such as group discussions, and creative assignments such as drawing.

**board work:** an activity which can be used as a written assessment by asking the learner to come to the chalkboard and perform a task there.

**class presentation:** an activity in which learners use their knowledge by presenting a product, process or idea to the class. Class presentations can be done by individual learners, or by groups of learners.

**closed questions:** questions for which there is only one answer - for example, "What is 4x4?"

**creative assignment:** activities in which learners express themselves through creative means - for example, drawing, story writing, expository writing and persuasive writing.

**expository writing:** an activity in which the learner explains in writing how something works, or how something came to be.

**fill in the blank:** a type of quiz in which the learner must provide missing words or phrases.

**group discussion:** an activity in which learners express their ideas to one another. Group discussions can be used for practice, performance, or assessment situations.

**mark:** a number assigned to a level of achievement. Marks can be raw scores (e.g., 15 answers correct out of 20 questions asked), or percentages (e.g., 75%), or symbols (e.g., letter grades: A, D, etc.)

**matching:** a type of quiz in which the learner must match items from one list with items from another.

**multiple choice:** a type of quiz in which the learner must choose from several options. Often, the learner must write a letter, or circle it.

**open questions:** questions for which several answers are possible - for example, "What are some characteristics of mammals?"

**oral assignments:** activities which can be used for assessment purposes - for example, strategic conversations, role plays, group discussions, and class presentations.

**percentage:** a score translated into a number over 100 - e.g., 15 out of 20 = 75%.

**persuasive writing:** an activity in which the learner explains in writing his/her position, gives support for that position, and tries to convince the reader to agree.

**question and answer:** a type of quiz in which the learner is asked a question for which he must answer with his/her own content. Question and answer quizzes can use closed questions or open-ended questions.

**quiz:** a short test, usually consisting of 5 to 10 questions. Quizzes are usually structured so that the learner has limited responses from which to answer. Examples include true/false, multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, and question and answer.

**raw score:** the actual number of items answered correctly on a quiz - e.g., if a learner scores 15 correct on a quiz of 20 items, his/her raw score is 15.

**role play:** a "small drama" in which two or more learners play the part of someone else - for example, a store owner and a customer. Role plays can be used for presentation, practice, performance or assessment purposes.

**setting up an assessment situation:** organizing an activity in which we can observe a learner to see if he/she has achieved certain competencies.

**strategic conversation:** a discussion you have with your learners in order to assess specific kinds of knowledge.

**symbol:** a letter assigned to a level of achievement. In Namibia, the letters A, B, C, D and E are used to indicate levels of achievement.

**tick:** a check mark (✓) that indicates whether a learner has achieved the competency or not. A tick indicates that a learner's performance is satisfactory.

**worksheet:** an assignment that can be presented either on the chalkboard or on a prepared piece of paper. Worksheets are used to reinforce something the learner has learned through practice.

**written assignments:** assessment activities such as quizzes, work sheets, and board work.

# MY NOTES

## The Teachers' Basic Competencies Manual - Module Titles

| <b>MODULES</b> | <b>ENGLISH</b>   | <b>OSHINDONGA</b>   | <b>RUKWANGALI</b>   | <b>OSHIKWANYAMA</b>  |
|----------------|--|---|---|--|
| MODULE 1       | Making a scheme of work  | Okuninga oskema yiilonga  | Kuninka epompeko lyoyirugana  | Okuninga oskema yoilonga   |
| MODULE 2       | Lesson planning  | Elongekidho iyoshileshwa  | Elirongikido yirongwa   | Elongekido loshileshwa   |
| MODULE 3       | Leamer-centred education   | Omukalo moka omulongwa ta dhana onkandangala melongo                                      | Nkareso omo murongwa a kara mpitakatji merongo                                | Omukalo moka omuhongwa eli ta dana onghadangala mehongo                                    |
| MODULE 4       | Continuous assessment , Part 1                                     | Etalotseyo Iya tsikilathana, Oshitopolwa 1  | Etarodiwo lyokutwikida, Ruha 1  | Etaloshiivo la twikilafana, Oshitukulwa 1  |
| MODULE 5       | Continuous assessment, Part 2                                      | Etalotseyo tali tsikile, Oshitopolwa 2  | Etarodiwo lyokutwikida, Ruha 2  | Etaloshiivo tali twikile, Oshitukulwa 2  |
| MODULE 6       | The Learning Environment   | Ehala lyokwiilongela  | Mevega Iyerongero   | Onhele yokulihongela mongulu yofikola  |
| MODULE 7       | Classroom management   | Omaihumbato newiliko mongulu yosikola   | Mpangera zomononkondwa rongero nonkareso zongwa                               | Omalihumbato newiliko  |
| MODULE 8       | Teaching large and multi-level classes                             | Okulonga ongundu yu udha  | Erongo lyomononkondwarongero donontambo dononenenedi dononzi                  | Ehongo leengudu diyadi   |
| MODULE 9       | Instructional materials, Part 1<br>10 Things to hang on the wall   | likwathitholongo, Oshitopolwa 1<br>10 linima yokutsilika kekuma                           | Yirongesesihepwa, Ruha 1<br>10 Yinike yokutwirika ke kuma.                    | Oikwafifihongo, Oshitukulwa 1<br>10 Oinima yokutwilika ke kuma                             |
| MODULE 10      | Instruction materials, Part 2<br>Manipulative teaching materials   | lilongithokwatheli mokugandja omalombwelo, Oshitopolwa 2 likwatomwa kwathitholongo        | Yirongesesihepwa, Ruha 2<br>Yinkwato yelongeseso                              | Oilongifokwafeli moku yandja omalombwelo, Oshitukulwa 2<br>Oikwatomwa                      |
| MODULE 11      | Instructional materials, Part 3<br>Manipulative learning materials | lilongithokwatheli mokugandja omalombwelo, Oshitopolwa 3<br>likwathitholongo iikwakugumwa | Mapukururo goyihepwa noyikwato rongeseso, Ruha 3<br>Yikwasesolongo yoyinkwato | Oikwafifihongo hai kumwa komuhongi mokuhonga, Oshitukulwa 3<br>Oikwafifihongo oikwakukumwa |
| MODULE 12      | Group work   | lilonga yopaungundu   | Yirugana yomombunga   | Oilonga yopaungudu   |
| MODULE 13      | Questioning techniques, Part 1<br>What kids of question do we ask? | Uunongo wokupula omapulo, Oshitopolwa 1<br>Omapula gomaludhi geni hatu ku pula?           | Nkaresodiwo pulisiso, Ruha 1<br>Mapuro gorudi musinke natu pura?              | Ounongo wokupula omapulo, Oshitukulwa 1.<br>Omapulo omaludi elipi e na okupulwa?           |
| MODULE 14      | Questioning techniques, Part 2<br>How do we as questions?          | Omaludhi gomapulo, Oshitukulwa 2<br>Nkene ta tu pula omapulo?                             | Nkaresodiwo pulisiso, Ruha 2<br>Ngapi omu natu pura mapura?                   | Omaludi omapulo, Oshitukulwa 2<br>Nghe hatu pula omapulo?                                  |
| MODULE 15      | Lesson presentation skills   | Uunongo wokugandja oshileshwa   | Udivi wondongeseso yirongwa   | Ounongo wokuyandja oshileshwa  |
| MODULE 16      | Childhood development  | Ekoko lyokanona   | Ekuro lyomonona   | Ekulo lokanona   |
| MODULE 17      | Teaching children according to their learning styles               | Okulonga aanona pamikalo ndhoka haa iilongo   | Kuronga vanona kukwama nkaresolirongo zawo                                    | Okuhonga oonona pamikalo odo have lihongo  |
| MODULE 18      | Learning problems and consolidation activities                     | Omaupyakadhi melongo niinyangadalwa yokuwathela   | Maudigu merongo noyirugana yekambadaro  | Omaupyakadi mehongo noinyangadalwa yokuwafela  |
| MODULE 19      | Helping children who are not well                                  | Okukwathela aanona mboka yaa li nawa  | Mbatero kovanona ava va dira kukara nawa                                      | Okukwafela oonona ovo vehe li nawa   |
| MODULE 20      | Teacher as professional  | Omulongi ongomunashilongaithano   | Murongi ngovakonentu  | Omuhongi ongomunashilongaifano   |

