

## Peer and self-assessment

### About this activity

Assessment and feedback are very useful for teaching and learning. Most language classes in public schools in Africa are usually very large. This makes regular assessment and feedback quite challenging for the language teacher. However, peer assessment strategies can be used to reduce the burden on the teacher, as well as improve learning.

#### Objectives

- To encourage collaborative and supportive peer learning
- To encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning
- To involve students in decision-making for their own learning
- To provide assessment guidelines for improved learning and teaching
- To help the teacher cope with the challenges of regular assessment and feedback, especially in a large class situation

#### Expected outcomes

- Enhanced motivation for learning and improved learning outcomes through knowledge of required assessment standards and how to achieve them
- Improved independent learning: learners have the opportunity to reflect and assess their own performance
- Supportive learning: students learning from each other through peer assessment and collaboration
- Reduced burden of assessment on the teacher of a large class, providing teacher with more time to plan and facilitate learning
- Encouraging interaction and dialogue around learning among learners and between teacher and learners
- Increased opportunity for the teacher to evaluate their teaching activity
- Developing learners' ability to monitor their own progress and achievement and take responsibility for their learning
- Provision of meaningful information and helpful criteria to improve learners' performance in future activities
- Reduced fear, anxiety, stress and negative thinking about teacher's assessment and formal exams
- Increased confidence in learners to assess own and others' work
- Improved communication and creative thinking skills

## Mingle

- Introduce and explain the idea of peer and self-assessment to learners.
- Invite learners to assist in formulating feedback criteria.
- Gradually train learners in how to give feedback by starting with small exercises until they become familiar with the idea.
- Make peer assessment into a classroom activity. Monitor to make sure that learners understand the task and are doing it correctly.
- Be ready to assist learners if they have difficulties with the activity.
- Show learners how feedback is related to learning goals.
- Demonstrate with examples of assessed work to help guide their own assessment.
- Encourage learners to review and react to the feedback they are given. This will help them to learn from it.
- From time to time, review and moderate learners' feedback.
- Use some form of code for assessment sheets instead of learners' names to prevent peer pressure and any ill feeling among learners.
- Provide learners with a feedback checklist. In this way, they can practise self- or peer assessment, even without the teacher's presence and assistance.
- Identify and train some stronger learners to act as peer assessors and who can assist the weaker learners.

## Demonstration

Language Focus: The Simple Sentence/Clause.

Level Focus: Senior secondary class 1.

Resources Needed: Pen, paper, flash cards, chalkboard, board marker.

### PROCEDURE

- Introduce and explain the idea of peer and self-assessment.
- Invite learners to assist in formulating feedback criteria for the specific activity.
- Divide the class into groups of 4-6.
- Write a short paragraph containing a mixture of simple, compound and complex clauses on the chalkboard.
- Ask each group to appoint a leader.
- Instruct the group leaders to copy the short paragraph in their workbooks.
- Instruct the groups to work together and underline the simple clauses.
- Set a time limit for the activity.
- Monitor and offer support where needed.
- After the allotted time, ask group leaders to exchange their worksheets.
- Show the correct answers on the board and ask groups to score the worksheets.
- Groups return assessed worksheets to the original owners.
- Encourage learners to react to the feedback.
- Discuss/revise the activity and give feedback to the whole class.

**Variations**

- Groups could be asked to reveal their scores before teacher provides the right answers.
- Peer or self-assessment: learners work independently and exchange their worksheets with a partner or check their own work with given criteria.
- Individual or group writing, reading and speaking tasks. Learners are given a topic to write or speak about and a checklist for scoring.

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