**Purposes of assessment**

The purposes of assessment are to:

- promote, assist and improve student learning
- inform programs of teaching and learning
- provide information for those people — students, parents, teachers — who need to know about the progress and achievements of individual students to help them achieve to the best of their abilities
- provide information for the issuing of certificates of achievement
- provide information to those people who need to know how well groups of students are achieving (school authorities, the State Minister for Education and Training and Training and the Arts, the Federal Minister for Education).

It is common practice to label assessment as being formative, diagnostic or summative, according to the major purpose of the assessment.

The major purpose of formative assessment is to help students attain higher levels of performance. The major purpose of diagnostic assessment is to determine the nature of students' learning, and then provide the appropriate feedback or intervention. The major purpose of summative assessment is to indicate the achievement status or standards achieved by students at a particular point in their schooling. It is geared towards reporting and certification.

**Syllabus requirements**

Teachers should ensure that assessment instruments are consistent with the requirements, techniques and conditions of the Spanish syllabus and the implementation year 2008.

**Assessment instruments**

High-quality assessment instruments:

- have construct validity (the instruments actually assess what they were designed to assess)
- have face validity (they appear to assess what you believe they are intended to assess)
- give students clear and definite instructions
- are written in language suited to the reading capabilities of the students for whom the instruments are intended
- are clearly presented through appropriate choice of layout, cues, visual design, format and choice of words
- are used under clear, definite and specified conditions that are appropriate for all the students whose achievements are being assessed
- have clear criteria for making judgments about achievements (these criteria are shared with students before they are assessed)
- are used under conditions that allow optimal participation for all
- are inclusive of students’ diverse backgrounds
- allow students to demonstrate the breadth and depth of their achievements
- only involve the reproduction of gender, socioeconomic, ethnic or other cultural factors if careful consideration has determined that such reproduction is necessary.

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2 Assessment instruments are the actual tools used by schools and the QSA to gather information about student achievement, for example, recorded observation of a game of volleyball, write-up of a field trip to the local water catchment and storage area, a test of number facts, the Senior External Examination in Chinese, the 2006 QCS Test, the 2008 Year 4 English comparable assessment task.
Spanish (2008)

Sample assessment instrument

Speaking

Compiled by the Queensland Studies Authority

October 2009

About this assessment instrument

This sample demonstrates:

- coverage of the general objectives relative to the stage of the four-semester course of study
- assessment of the dimensions of Conveying meaning in the macroskill of Speaking
- spontaneous and flexible language use for a particular purpose and audience.
Designing assessment instruments

To ensure that appropriate opportunities to demonstrate the syllabus criteria and standards are provided, teachers should design assessment instruments that cover the dimensions and standard descriptors across a range of topics and text types.

Designing assessment instruments — Speaking

The aspects to be addressed are:

- range
- cohesive devices
- register
- pronunciation
- meaning
- conversation
- spoken communication
- non-verbal features.

Sample assessment instrument

The following sample assessment instrument provides opportunities for students to demonstrate:

- a link between learning and assessment — information presented in the student response is not only relevant to the task but also reflects language and structures acquired during the course of study and, in particular, while studying the current topic or unit of work
- authentic language use
- spontaneous language ability — the ability to initiate and sustain conversation
- a wide range of vocabulary and structures
- an ability to modify register to suit particular situations — register should change as students move from the more formal parts of the task (the speech) to the less formal (the conversation).
**Scenario**
A group of Spanish students are coming to visit your school. You have been asked to present a welcome speech.

**Task**
You should prepare a welcome speech that includes:
- a formal self-introduction
- a formal welcome to your school
- a brief discussion of what the students should expect during their stay including:
  - any particular information about your school that the students may need to know in order to participate on a day-to-day basis
  - relevant examples from your own experience to illustrate your points.

There will be questions at the end of your talk, so be prepared to respond as best you can and to help the students as much as possible.

**Conditions**
You have **one night** to prepare your speech. You may have palm cards but only in point form. Your speech must be a **minimum of 3 minutes in length**. Your teacher will take on the role of a visiting student. Questions with the teacher will be outside the classroom and will be recorded. You will not be allowed to have any notes for the **question section**, which will be **3 minutes in length**.
### Task Specific Criteria and Standards for Conveying meaning (Speaking)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard A</th>
<th>Standard B</th>
<th>Standard C</th>
<th>Standard D</th>
<th>Standard E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>knowing and using language features:</strong></td>
<td><strong>knowing and using language features:</strong></td>
<td><strong>knowing and using language features:</strong></td>
<td><strong>knowing and using language features:</strong></td>
<td><strong>knowing and using language features:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a wide range of vocabulary and grammar is used effectively, with few errors</td>
<td>a range of vocabulary and grammar is used effectively, although with some errors</td>
<td>a range of familiar vocabulary and grammar is used, although errors are evident</td>
<td>some familiar vocabulary and grammar is used, although frequent errors are made</td>
<td>responses may be single words or short, well-rehearsed phrases, using familiar vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a range of cohesive devices is used to express connected thoughts and ideas</td>
<td>Selected cohesive devices are used to connect familiar thoughts and ideas</td>
<td>basic cohesive devices are used to connect simple ideas</td>
<td>some simple linking words are used, the whole context is intelligible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>register is appropriate to the situation</td>
<td>register is usually appropriate to the situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and stress are acceptable to a background speaker</td>
<td>pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and stress are acceptable to a background speaker</td>
<td>pronunciation may be affected by first language but is comprehensible by a background speaker</td>
<td>pronunciation hinders communication</td>
<td>pronunciation hinders communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>creating and responding:</td>
<td>creating and responding:</td>
<td>creating and responding:</td>
<td>creating and responding:</td>
<td>creating and responding:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ideas, information and meaning are communicated clearly and effectively, although some errors may occur in complex language</td>
<td>ideas, information and meaning are usually communicated clearly, although errors may occur in complex language</td>
<td>where a variety of structures is used, the essential meaning is clear, although there may be frequent errors</td>
<td>there is sufficient accuracy to enable some details to be understood</td>
<td>some simple meanings are conveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversation is initiated and sustained</td>
<td>conversation is generally sustained</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>spoken communication demonstrates flexibility, coherence, spontaneity and relevance to the context</td>
<td>spoken communication demonstrates flexibility when using familiar language</td>
<td>spoken communication relies on prompts and cues</td>
<td>spoken communication relies heavily on prompts and cues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responses are relevant to the context, although they may be hesitant</td>
<td>responses are hesitant, repetitive and formulaic but relevant to the context</td>
<td></td>
<td>responses are hesitant, repetitive and rehearsed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>appropriate pause fillers and nonverbal features are used where required</td>
<td>some appropriate pause fillers and nonverbal features are used</td>
<td>some nonverbal features are used</td>
<td>some nonverbal features are used</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opportunities for student responses that may be matched to these descriptors will be provided in both the speech and question sections of the assessment task.