

# **Diagnostic Assessment at Standard III**

**A Novel Child-Centred  
Approach to Assessment**

**Johannesburg April 2015**

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- First piloted in 2008
  - Implemented in 2009

# Background of project

- A number of children who enter Std 1 reach Std VI without having acquired the basic literacy and numeracy skills
- Lack of a mechanism to identify children at risk



# Underlying principle

Mitigate the adverse effect of the present system

# Purpose

- Take stock of how much learning has occurred during Stds 1& 2  
*strengths and weaknesses*
- Feedback to feed forward  
*remediation and consolidation*
- Teachers can plan their lesson accordingly

# Diagnostic Assessment

- Not an examination nor a class test  
Administered at the beginning of the year
- Not meant to compare pupils, to give them marks, grades nor to rank them
- Not meant to judge teachers

# Main objective of the Diagnostic Assessment

- Support teachers and pupils
- Identify learning difficulties early enough
- Take appropriate measures to attend to these difficulties
- Key skills of literacy and numeracy

*“ L’enfant n’apprend pas pour être évalué.*

*Il est évalué pour mieux apprendre.*

*Et pour que l’enseignant puisse mieux*

# Instruments

- 2 pupil's workbooks (English and Mathematics)
- 1 teacher's handbook
- 1 booklet ( Guidance for the installation of software and analysis of results)

# Teacher's handbook

- Detailed instructions for the administration of the assessment
- It must be administered in the same way in all schools (whatever be the region, the level and status of the school)
- Ensure that all children understand what is required

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- Instructions for marking
  - Instructions for the recording of results
  - Methodology for the analysis of results for each pupil for the class

# Pupil's workbooks

- No instructions
- Reading load reduced
- Teacher gives the instructions
- Teacher gives examples on the board
- Teacher takes pupils through the different questions and items

# Pupil friendly assessment

- Pupils not alone in front of a test paper
- Items are not the reproduction of textbook items
- Items are attractive, interesting, challenging
- Pupils have the impression of playing
- Assessment conducted in short sessions (20 mins)

# Characteristics of the assessment

- Competency and skill based
- Not content based
- One competency broken down into sub-competencies
- One competency tested through 3-4 items
- Specific difficulty can be identified

# MATHEMATICS

Topic	Skills and Competencies	Tasks/Activities	Exercise	Items
<b>Number &amp; Number Sense</b>	Count, read and write numbers up to 100	§ Write dictated numbers. § Continue a sequence of numbers § Count a given number of objects § Represent a given number using objects	§ 8 § 3 § 1 § 2	28 – 31 5 – 7 1, 2 3, 4
	Order numbers	§ Compare numbers § Situate numbers	§ 4 § 5	8 – 15 16 – 18
	Do simple calculations	§ Mental calculations (Addition) § Addition § Subtraction	§ 6 § 7 § 9	19 – 22 23 – 27 32 – 37
<b>Space and Shapes</b>	Identify geometrical shapes	§ Identify square, circle, rectangle, triangle	§ 10	38 – 41
<b>Measures</b>	Compare lengths	§ Distinguish the longer (shorter) objects given two or more objects	§ 12	45, 46
	Compare masses	§ Distinguish the heavier (lighter) objects between two given objects	§ 11	42 – 44
	Work with notes and coins	§ Decompose a given amount of money	§ 13, 14	47, 48

# ENGLISH

Language Component		Skills and Competencies	Task	Exercise	Items
Reading	Word Recognition	Breaking written (or heard) words into their smallest constituents	Distinguish different phonemes	5	15 - 20
		Identifying words (direct/indirect way)	Identify the mismatch between the visual representation of a word and its spelling	13	46 - 49
			Identify a word in a set of words which are visually related	3	9 - 12
			Identify a word in a set where 2 words are phonetically identical	1	1 - 4
	Comprehension	Structuring available vocabulary	Find the definition of a common word	9	33 - 35
			Identify the odd one out in a lexical category	11	39 - 41
			Identify to which lexical category a set of words belongs	12	42 - 45
		Dealing with the organisation of a sentence or a short text	Choose the right word to complete a text	6	21 - 24
			Find the sentence which makes sense out of three propositions	8	30 - 32
			Choose the picture which corresponds to a given sentence using syntactic clues	4	13 - 14
Retrieving information	Retrieve specific information from a text read by the pupil	2	5 - 8		
Writing		Copying a given sentence and abiding by the spelling of the given words	Copy a sentence without making any spelling mistake	7	25 - 29
		Writing while respecting the rules of coding	Writing dictated words, a dictated phrase and a dictated sentence	10	36 - 38

# Identifying words

3 sub competencies are assessed

- Identify mismatch between visual representation of a word and its spelling
- Identify a word in a set of words which are visually related
- Identify a word in a set where 2 words are phonetically related

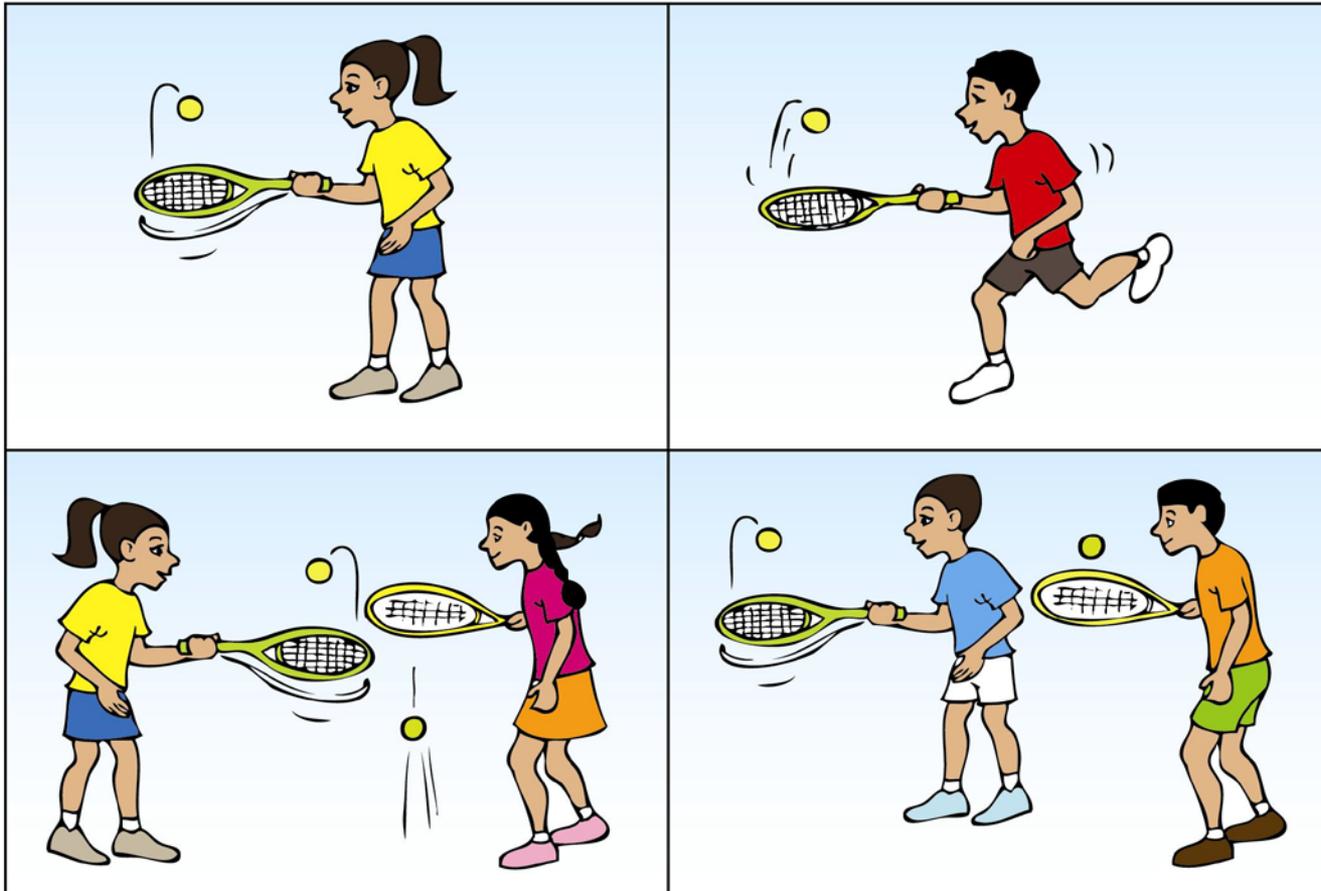
# Comprehension

- Not only comprehension of words
- But comprehension of text/sentence using syntactic clues

# **Dealing with the Organisation of a Sentence or a Short Text**

- Choose the right word to complete a text
- Find the sentence which makes sense out of three propositions
- Choose the picture which corresponds to a given sentence using syntactic clues

# ENGLISH



The boys are playing.

# Copying a given sentence

5 sub competencies are assessed

- all the words are written
- all the letters are properly shaped
- no letter is missing
- the capital letter and the full stop are present
- the word is clearly legible

# Analysis of Results

- Analysis grid to record the results for each pupil, for each question/item and in the order of the items
- Computer software for the input of data

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- Generates an analysis of the results for
    - the class
    - the school
  - Information about the needs of pupils at the beginning of the year
  - In a better position to organise the teaching

# Follow up actions

- Setting up of specialised teams to provide the pedagogical support required at the level of the school
- Provision of training
- Putting into place a system of individualised support to children with serious learning difficulties
- Initiatives undertaken in the context of the Remedial Education Strategy



# Reports

- Reports not released publicly
- Submitted to Ministry
- Used by Teachers, Inspectors and Directors