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Test Creation Assignment

EDSL 412 – Assessment in TESL

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**Introduction**

**Test takers:** secondary 1 ESL students from a francophone high school from the south shore of Montreal.

**When:** This test would be held at the beginning of the year.

**Purpose:** Instructional - we are testing our students’ reading and comprehension skills, using a text that they should be able to understand on their own.

**Exam objective/goal:** To gain an understanding of where our students are, which readability level they can read at (for future classes).

**Prior work:** They have been scaffolded by the teacher to read on their own (using reading strategies) for the past two weeks.

**Other important details:** The text we chose is a revised version of The Tell-Tale Heart written by Edgar Allan Poe. It was specifically adapted for learners for whom English is their second language, aiming for high-intermediate and advanced learners.  
Students will have enough time to read the text at least twice. They are invited to highlight and take notes since these are strategies that could help them do better once they start the test. Then, they will answer the closed book test.  They are not allowed to have the text or any notes while they are completing their exam.

**Description of Readability Tool used:** The tool that we used was one that we found online called Online Utility. This is a completely free tool that can use multiple times. We were able to copy-paste our text into the space provided and then processed the text. It provided us with multiple different readability scores including the Flesch Kincaid grade level score which we used to determine the grade our imagined students should be in.

<https://www.online-utility.org/english/readability_test_and_improve.jsp>

**Grade Readability Level:** The grade level of readability of the adapted version of Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe is 4.87, which we rounded up to 5. Because ESL students are usually expected to read a level below theirs, it is perfect for grade 6th students. However, this text is suitable for secondary 1 students if done at the beginning of the school year for the teacher to assess their actual reading levels to plan for the upcoming readings.

**Part 1: Student version of exam**

\*\*\*Ready-to-use version of the test tarting on the next page\*\*\*

Name: Group:

**The Tell-Tale Heart**

**Multiple Choice Questions**

Instructions: Carefully read the questions and circle the right answer.

1. What was the eye of the old man like?
   * 1. Raven
     2. Owl
     3. Vulture
     4. Eagle
2. At what time would the narrator visit the old man in his room without him noticing?
   * 1. 12 o’clock
     2. 3 o’clock
     3. 7 o’clock
     4. 4 o’clock
3. For how long did the narrator secretly visit the old man without interacting with him?
   * 1. 5 nights
     2. 2 nights
     3. 9 nights
     4. 7 nights

**True or False Questions**Instructions: Read each statement and circle either true (T) or false (F).

1. The narrator is ill. True / False
2. The narrator showed up in the old man’s bedroom with a knife. True / False
3. The old man was not afraid to die. True / False
4. During the day, the narrator was friendly with the old man. True / False
5. The narrator’s sense of hearing was weak. True / False
6. The old man died in his bedroom. True / False

**Matching Question**Instructions: Complete the following elements of the *Tell-Tale Heart* story by matching the appropriate answer to the correct statement.

1. The character who killed the old man A. The neighbor
2. The person who called for help B. The narrator
3. The character who was visited at night C. The police  
    D. The old man

**Fill in the blank Questions**Instructions: Read the excerpts from the *Tell-Tale Heart.* Complete it by choosing the appropriate answer from the word bank and write it down on the corresponding line.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| great | angry | quiet | loudly |
| louder | greater | pain | quietly |
| “It was the beating of the old man’s heart. I tried to stand \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. But the sound grew louder. The old man’s fear must have been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ indeed. And as the sound grew louder my anger became \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and more painful. But it was more than anger. In the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ night, in the dark silence of the bedroom my anger became fear - for the heart was beating so \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that I was sure someone must hear.” | | | |



|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| heard | do | sat | am | felt |
| feel | heard | was | did | sit |
| “He just \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ there, listening. Then I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a sound, a low cry of fear which escaped from the old man. Now I knew that he was sitting up in his bed, filled with fear; I knew that he knew I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ there. He \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ not see me there. He could not hear me there. He me there.” | | | | |

**Short Answer Questions**Instructions: Read the following questions and provide an answer for each. Make sure to use complete sentences.

1. Who were the three men who showed up at the door?

1. What was the reason given for killing the old man?

1. What made the murderer confess his crime?

**Part 2: Exam Analysis**

**\*\*\*The Tell-Tale Heart ANSWER KEY\*\*\***

**Multiple Choice Questions**

|  |
| --- |
| **Knowledge/understanding you will measure:** Student’s ability to memorize information. **Bloom’s taxonomy:** Remembering |

Instructions: Carefully read the questions and circle the right answer.

1. What was the eye of the old man like?

**C. Vulture**

1. At what time would the narrator visit the old man in his room without him noticing?

**A. 12 o’clock**

1. For how long did the narrator secretly visit the old man without interacting with him?

**D. 7 nights**

**True or False Questions**

|  |
| --- |
| **Knowledge/understanding you will measure:** Demonstration of students’ understanding of the story’s components. **Bloom’s taxonomy:** Applying |

Instructions: Read each statement and circle either true (T) or false (F).

1. The narrator is ill. **True**
2. The narrator showed up in the old man’s bedroom with a knife. **False**
3. The old man was not afraid to die. **False**
4. During the day, the narrator was friendly with the old man. **True**
5. The narrator’s sense of hearing was weak. **False**
6. The old man died in his bedroom. **True**

**Matching Question**

|  |
| --- |
| **Knowledge/understanding you will measure:** Checking for students’ ability to remember detailed events and characters from a text. **Bloom’s taxonomy:** Remembering |

Instructions: Complete the following elements of the *Tell-Tale Heart* story by matching the appropriate answer to the correct statement.

1. **B** The character who killed the old man A. The neighbor
2. **A** The person who called for help B. The narrator
3. **D** The character who was visited at night C. The police  
    D. The old man

**Fill in the blank Questions**Instructions: Read the excerpts from the *Tell-Tale Heart.* Complete it by choosing the appropriate answer from the word bank and write it down on the corresponding line.

|  |
| --- |
| **Knowledge/understanding you will measure:** Differentiation between adjectives and adverbs. **Bloom’s taxonomy:** Analyzing |

|  |
| --- |
| “It was the beating of the old man’s heart. I tried to stand **quietly**. But the sound grew louder. The old man’s fear must have been **great** indeed. And as the sound grew louder my anger became **greater** and more painful. But it was more than anger. In the **quiet** night, in the dark silence of the bedroom my anger became fear - for the heart was beating so **loudly** that I was sure someone must hear.” |

|  |
| --- |
| **Knowledge/understanding you will measure:** Demonstration of the student’s knowledge of the irregular verbs used in the past tense. **Bloom’s taxonomy:** Applying |

|  |
| --- |
| “He just **sat** there, listening. Then I **heard** a sound, a low cry of fear which escaped from the old man. Now I knew that he was sitting up in his bed, filled with fear; I knew that he knew I **was** there. He **did** not see me there. He could not hear me there. He **felt** me there.” |

**Short Answer Questions**Instructions: Read the following questions and provide an answer for each. Make sure to use complete sentences.

1. Who were the three men who showed up at the door?

**They were policemen.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Knowledge/understanding you will measure:** Ability to recall who the characters were. **Bloom’s taxonomy:** Remembering |

1. What was the reason given for killing the old man?

**Because of his evil eye. / Because of his vulture eye.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Knowledge/understanding you will measure:** Ability to describe what happened in a text they just read. **Bloom’s taxonomy:** Understanding |

1. What made the murderer confess his crime?  
   **He could hear the Old Man’s heart beating and thought the policemen knew.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Knowledge/understanding you will measure:** Ability to describe what happened in a text they just read. **Bloom’s taxonomy:** Understanding |

**Analysis of cornerstones:**

**Practicality:**

This test is very practical as it did not take a significant amount of time for the teacher to design. Also, it will only take a very short period to grade since there are not a large amount of questions and since they are not subjective, they do not require the teacher to take a significant amount of time to read and reflect on what the students’ answer is and if it is considered correct or not. This test will also have a guided washback since students will be made aware that this exam is to be used to determine their reading comprehension level to design lessons at the appropriate level. It is for this same reason that the teacher will also experience a guided washback as this will facilitate their task in creating successful level appropriate unit/lesson plans.

**Authenticity:**

Although this test does not reflect real-life situations or contexts, it does provide authenticity in the classroom. This test provides the teacher with the reading comprehension level of students.  This will then ensure that the readability level is used appropriately (gradually increasing in difficulty as students gain more knowledge throughout the year) which will provide students with the necessary skills and language they are likely to encounter in their real-life situations.

**Alignment:**

This test assesses the content and skills that we have been targeting since the start of the school year. For the past two weeks, we have been asking students to read on their own (whatever they wish so long as it is in English) and have been providing them with reading strategies that will help them improve their reading comprehension. Therefore, this test is greatly aligned with the targeted skills of our lessons.

**Transparency/fairness:**

Students would be told in advance that they would not be allowed to have the text or their notes with them during the test but that they would be given time to properly understand what it is that they read. They would also be told that this test serves as a way for the teacher to identify their readability level so that appropriate lessons can be developed so as to challenge students without them being too difficult. Students would be aware of the fact that this test would not contribute to their final grades. Finally, students would be told that the test is about content and comprehension rather than testing knowledge of literary elements.

**Conclusion**

This test creation went very smoothly. We are both used to working with each other after four years of university and both enjoy it since we are very focused on producing quality work. Camille suggested right away that we use The Tell-Tale Heart as the text that we would use to evaluate students and there was no objection as this is a text that both of us know well. After having found a website that gave us the readability level we decided to focus on reading comprehension questions over something more complex like the identification of literary elements. Camille got to work on it very quickly and came up with the questions which Alyssia then looked over and made sure respected all the guidelines for the creation of a successful test, changing certain questions or wordings when necessary. We then proceeded to work on the introduction section as we found it easier to complete once we knew exactly what we were doing for the test questions. We also collaboratively looked over the knowledge/understanding for each question or question type to make sure that it was only evaluating one thing per question or question type. Alyssia then completed the analysis of the cornerstones identifying how the test fit into each individual cornerstone. Camille then looked over this section to make any corrections needed. Alyssia then typed up the conclusion section detailing the division of tasks. The materials were chosen collaboratively, adding what we thought was necessary to do the task. Camille did the bibliography using APA and Alyssia took a second look at them to make sure nothing was missing and that all sources respected the APA guidelines. Finally, Alyssia put together all the document for submission.

**Material**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Tell-Tale Heart text | Pencil and eraser |
| Highlighter (used as reading) | Test |

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