

## Assessing Against Learning Outcomes, Module 4

### 4.1 Question Types

Before rewriting the questions, let's look at the question types we might like to choose from.

There are a number of question types available to us. All have pros and cons. Multiple choice questions are easy to mark and therefore very popular but can be tricky to write. Summary clozes or gap fills are easier to write but take longer to mark and may have more than one possibility as a correct response. The same with short answer questions. Grids are actually a great idea but can be very difficult for students to understand without a lot practice. Matching is very useful for checking specific meaning. Ordering is popular when the test involves sequencing and requires very little writing. And finally, information transfer is another popular option for low levels as it lends itself to using pictures. With all the question types, it is important to pilot them on students first.

Our advice is to use a variety of different question types but not too many or you may confuse your students. Make sure that your students are familiar with the types of questions you use and that they understand what they are supposed to do. So, practice the question types that students are confronted with in their assessment tasks and test in class. Start with some easy questions as a lead in and we recommend that the questions follow the text.

These tips help reduce anxiety during test time, allowing students to do their best. Once you have written the questions, pilot them on your colleagues who can offer you some constructive feedback. Once you are happy with them, pilot the task on a different set of students, perhaps a higher level class and see if the results appear valid and reliable.

In addition to the questions themselves, we recommend that you prepare instructions and an answer key for each assessment task to ensure consistency across assessors and students.

The NEAS Assessment Validation team prepared a suggested amended task which includes both teacher and student instructions, marking guides and an answer key.

In addition, we used a range of different question forms, multiple choice, gap fill and short answer which generally follow the order of the reading passage.