

Assessing learners' needs and lacks

Level: All

Age: Young Adults – Adults

Time needed: 60 minutes +

Lesson aim:

- To encourage learners to self-assess their language learning progress and processes
- To help learners understand the criteria they have to meet and their ability to meet these criteria
- To help learners to reflect on language learning goals and their needs and lacks

Skills: Speaking, writing

Materials needed: Needs Analysis; Printout of level descriptors e.g. CEFR self-assessment grid which can be found at:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-2-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-self-assessment-grid>

(Note: if teaching low-level learners, teachers might consider printing out level descriptors in the learners' first language)

Item 4 promotes self-awareness of motivating topics.
Item 5 promotes self-awareness of a realistic end goal.
Item 6 promotes self-awareness of strengths.
Item 7 promotes self-awareness of weaknesses and goals.

2. Put learners in pairs and have them discuss their answers and their thoughts.
3. Conduct feedback with the whole class, asking learners to volunteer any interesting thoughts and discussions that they would like to share with the class.

Item 8: Level descriptors

4. Tell learners to think about their answers to items 1, 6 and 7 as they answer item 8. Hand out the level descriptors. Have learners read the level descriptors and find 'can do' statements that apply to what they can already do. They should also find statements that describe what they can't do yet.
5. Get learners to discuss their findings in pairs or small groups. They should discuss what they can do now and can't do yet.

Items 1–7: Self-assessment

1. Tell learners that you would like them to think about their progress in learning English. Hand out the Needs Analysis and ask them to complete items 1 to 7. Give learners 10–15 minutes. Feel free to help learners with any unknown language.

This Needs Analysis helps learners to reflect on their own learning journeys and raises awareness of the different areas that impact on their relationship with English and with their own learning. It also helps you to better understand your learners and provides useful information that can help you plan and deliver your courses in ways that are relevant and motivating to your learners.

Item 1 promotes self-awareness of skills.
Item 2 promotes self-awareness of progress.
Item 3 promotes self-awareness of the use of learning strategies.

Item 9: Goal setting

6. Have learners do item 9 of the Needs Analysis. Tell learners to reflect on what they've discussed and write down three goals that they'd like to achieve this month/term. They can share their goals with partners, small groups, or the whole class.
7. Have learners write their goals down. If you'd like learners to be more publically accountable for the achievement of those goals, have them first write their goals down and then display them. This can be either physically on a slip of paper which goes on the classroom wall or on a shared platform or online space. When they feel they've achieved their goal, they can mark that goal as complete.
8. Collect each learner's needs analysis to help in your course planning.