



Developing **thinking**



Developing **communication**



Developing **number**

Optional Skills Assessment Materials

Optional Skills Assessment Materials for Year 5

An overview



Optional Skills Assessment Materials for Year 5

An overview

Audience	Teachers at Key Stage 2, in particular those with Year 5 classes; local authorities; tutors in initial teacher training; and others with an interest in education.
Overview	These new materials support learning, teaching and assessment of learners' skills in Year 5. They are designed to assist schools in implementing the revised school curriculum and its frameworks.
Action required	Schools' senior managers and local authority advisers are requested to raise awareness of these new materials within their schools, and to encourage teachers to use the materials to support their focus on developing learners' skills.
Further information	Enquiries about this document should be directed to: Curriculum and Assessment Division Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills Welsh Assembly Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ Tel: 0800 083 6003 e-mail: C&A3-14.C&A3-14@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Additional copies	Can be obtained from: Tel: 0845 603 1108 (English medium) 0870 242 3206 (Welsh medium) Fax: 01767 375920 e-mail: dcells1@prolog.uk.com Or by visiting the Welsh Assembly Government's website www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills
Related documents	<i>Optional Skills Assessment Materials: Developing thinking;</i> <i>Optional Skills Assessment Materials: Developing communication;</i> <i>Optional Skills Assessment Materials: Developing number</i> (Welsh Assembly Government, 2009)



Contents

Introduction	2
What are the OSAMs?	3
How will the OSAMs help teachers and learners?	4
What are the key features of the OSAMs?	5
How do the OSAMs offer assessment opportunities?	7
Future developments	10
List of OSAM resources	11
Acknowledgements	12

Introduction

Welcome to the first series of Optional Skills Assessment Materials (OSAMs). These new resources support learning, teaching and assessment of learners' skills in Year 5.

This overview outlines what the OSAMs offer teachers and their learners, and how the resources support skills development in the context of the school curriculum.

During 2007–08, hundreds of Year 5 teachers and their classes trialled and commented on the value and manageability of these resources. The materials we are now providing to all schools are the first product of this partnership working. Development work and piloting are continuing throughout the school year 2008–09, in order to send schools further materials to supplement and extend this bank of optional resources.

The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) has also provided local authorities with an INSET pack which covers the philosophy and approach which underpin the OSAMs development. This INSET resource is designed to assist local support and training.

What are the OSAMs?

The OSAMs support learning within the context of the school curriculum for Year 5. These resources should assist teachers to develop and formatively assess all learners' acquisition of skills.

The materials cover the three skills areas of developing thinking, communication and number, across the curriculum. These materials are provided as separate English- and Welsh-medium resources.

For each of the skills areas, the package comprises the following:

- a teacher's guide
- activity book(s)
- CD-ROMs capturing all the written materials, electronic resources for the activities and video clips to exemplify teacher assessment.

You will find a full list of the materials on page 11.

The individual resources may be used in part or in their entirety; they are optional and flexible.

How will the OSAMs help teachers and learners?

Teachers will want to employ a variety of ways to identify and assess individual learners' acquisition of skills. The materials are designed to help teachers to gather relevant evidence by supporting:

- development of learners' skills
- formative assessment of progression in these skills.

The examples in the teacher's guides show how learners might demonstrate progression, through their approach to tasks and the outcomes they achieve.

The OSAMs aim to promote effective learning and teaching by:

- stimulating learner engagement and exploration
- promoting learner discussion and decision-making (e.g. how best to tackle a task)
- encouraging learners to justify ideas and choices (e.g. tools/strategies used)
- highlighting learner reflection on their own learning
- emphasising peer and self-assessment to inform next steps
- helping teachers in deciding how best to organise and manage learning.

What are the key features of the OSAMs?

Supporting effective learning and teaching

The OSAMs are designed to support schools to review teaching methodology and improve learning. They do this by offering opportunities to encourage learners to assume greater ownership of their learning. They make suggestions as to how to carry out an activity rather than direct the teacher.

Designed for flexible use

The materials are designed to be used in everyday learning and teaching, and can be incorporated into a wide variety of learning plans or schemes of work.

Although each activity has been set in the context of specific subjects or subject areas, most have suggestions for further use, including development within other subjects/areas.

As all learners' needs are different, teachers are encouraged to modify the activities to fit better with these needs. Examples showing how some teachers have used the materials are given in the teacher's guides.

Promoting collaborative learning

Effective collaboration in the classroom is key to improving the quality of learning. Teachers will want to ensure that all learners feel that the classroom is a safe and reflective environment in which they can take risks with their ideas.

Within the OSAMs (Developing thinking and communication), suggestions are included on different methods of collaborative working. These are suggestions that teachers may wish to employ if they best suit their learners and their teaching. Icons have been used to highlight these suggestions.



Highlighting the importance of questioning

Asking 'good' questions is a valuable way to ensure that learners progress, focus on the process of learning, make links and reflect on their learning. Examples of useful questioning techniques include the following:

Using 'Big Questions' with learners to set the scene of a task

Learning objectives are posed as questions, which can be openly explored.

Examples of 'Big Questions' used in the OSAMs activities are:

Developing communication: 'What can a face tell us?'

Developing number: 'How could we measure the passage of time if there were only 88 days in a year?'

Optional Skills Assessment Materials for Year 5 | An overview

Using directed questions to unpick the process of learning

This should facilitate learners' understanding of how they are learning or have learnt. This is an essential part of transferring skills, knowledge and understanding from one context to another.

Emphasising the key role of success criteria

Where appropriate to the task, it is recommended that criteria for judging the success of outcomes are determined by learners themselves, with support from the teacher as required.

Examples of activities that use success criteria include:

Developing thinking: 'Poetry performance'

Developing communication: 'What are the elements of a good storytelling performance?'

Developing number: 'Designing tiles', 'Designing clocks'

Using tools and strategies to structure learning

Some of the activities make suggestions as to tools and strategies¹ that could be used to help learners structure, or, at times, unpick their learning.

For example:

Developing thinking: 'Beach challenge' suggests using diamond ranking and/or a circle map.

¹Generic tools and strategies can be found in the DCELLS web-based booklet: *How to develop thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom*. This booklet also explains why the tools and strategies are useful in progressing learning. Weblink: www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills

How do the OSAMs offer assessment opportunities?

The OSAMs are linked to the DCELLS' publication *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (2008). The skills framework provides guidance about continuity and progression in learners' development of skills across the curriculum. The materials give learners opportunities to evidence behaviours and outcomes, which could exemplify principles² and cells³, from the skills framework, within Developing thinking, communication or number. The teacher's guide for each of these skills areas provides guidance and examples.

Section of the skills framework showing a principle and cells

Asking questions 	Ask why, what, how, where, when, etc.	Ask questions related to context and listen before asking further questions.	Ask relevant questions and begin to link questions into sequences. Give reasons for choice of questions.	Ask questions that build on responses to earlier questions.	Ask more probing questions.	Identify the problem and set the questions to resolve it.
Principle				Cell		

Progression within the skills framework

For the sake of clarity and for practical design reasons, the skills framework is presented as a six-column continuum and identifies aspects of progression from the Foundation Phase to post-16 for the notional 'average' learner.

Progression is described on page 5 of the skills framework. Because skills development is spiral rather than linear, progression in skills is achieved by an increase in the challenge of the contexts through which skills are developed. This means that some of the skills at the 'end' of the six-column continuum in the framework might well be demonstrated by quite young learners – for example, the ability to evaluate what has been achieved. Equally, some of the skills described at the beginning of the continuum can quite appropriately be demonstrated by young adults.

The framework assumes that the skills identified in each stage of progression have been demonstrated – at least at a simple level – by learners before they move to the next stage. Progression is cumulative as well as being linked to increasing challenge in the resources used, the concepts explored, and the contexts in which skills are developed.

² **Principle:** A specific type of a skill, which unpicks the finer details involved in the development of each skill area. In the skills framework the principles are given in bold type in the left-hand column.

Note: In the skills framework the Developing number section of the framework refers to these principles as strands.

³ **Cell:** A specific point along the progression of a principle that indicates a stage in that progression. It reflects likely behaviours or outcomes in response to a suitable challenge.

How is progression in the development of skills interpreted by the OSAMs?

The OSAMs use contexts that are relevant to the majority of Year 5 learners and appropriate in focus and challenge to the school curriculum for Year 5. In this way, as learners carry out the activities, their behaviours and outcomes could be linked to principles and individual cells within a principle.

How is progression in the development of skills demonstrated in the OSAMs?

Each theme or activity starts with a table that demonstrates how the activity links to the principles in the skills framework. This is entitled 'Links to skills framework' and shows the principles that are the main foci, incidental foci and those for which there is no intentional focus. These categories of principles are only given as a guide, as it is likely that other principles could be focused upon rather than the ones stated.

Oracy
● Developing information and ideas
● Presenting information and ideas
Reading
○ Locating, selecting and using information using reading strategies
○ Responding to what has been read
Writing
○ Organising ideas and information
○ Writing accurately
Wider communication
● Communicating ideas and emotions
● Communicating information
Key
● Main focus ● Incidental focus
○ No intentional focus

The activities give opportunities for learners to demonstrate behaviours and outcomes. There are examples of these task-specific criteria in the 'What to look for' section of each activity. The criteria given are not exhaustive and learners will evidence many of their own. However, they provide guidance to teachers as to how learners might evidence skills progression.

The relevant teacher's guide then shows how these task-specific criteria might link to individual cells in the skills framework. This is exemplified by learners' work from the development trials and pilots within schools across Wales.

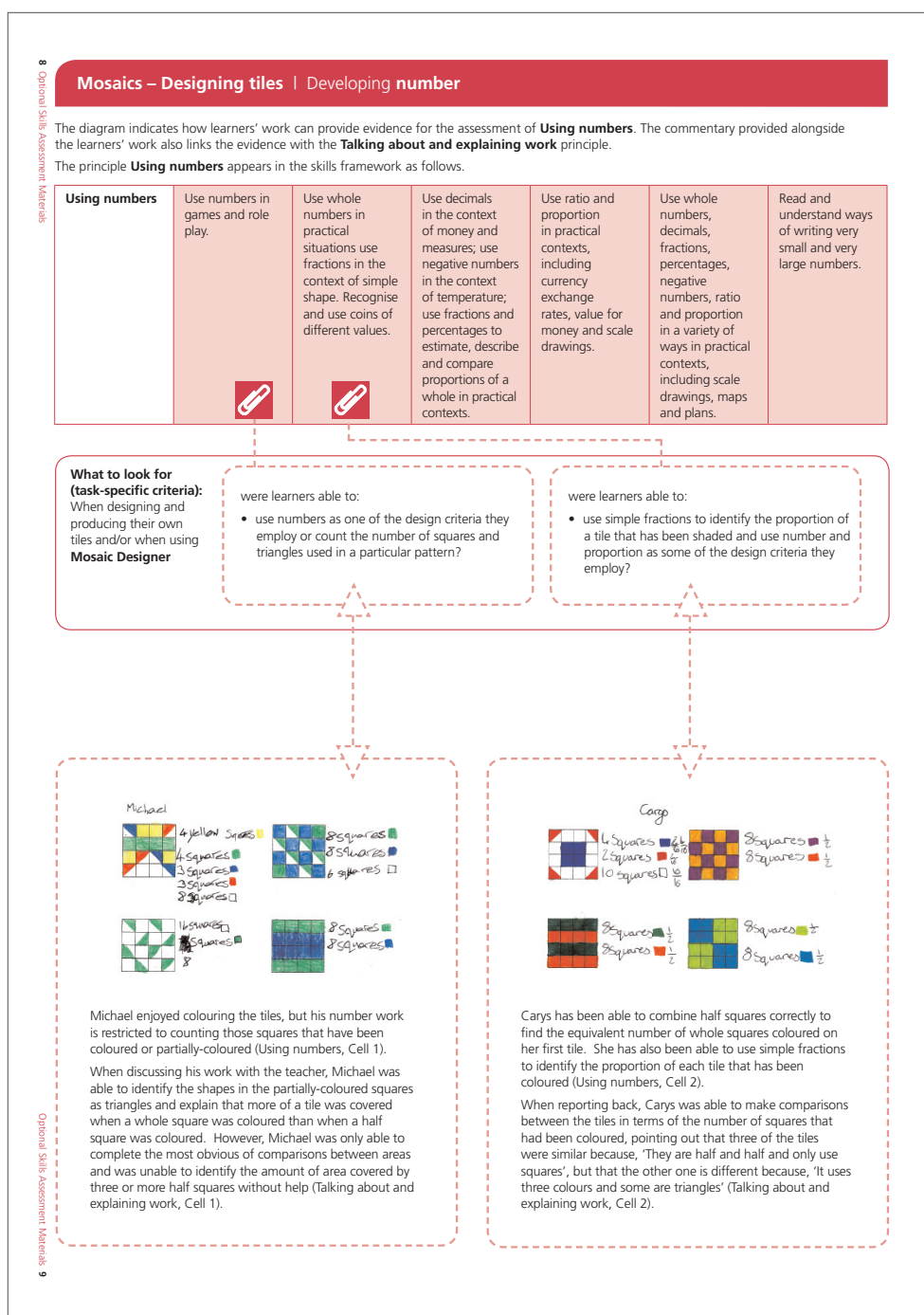
The linking of evidence, from learners' responses, to specific cells in the skills framework is not an exact science. One piece of evidence may well demonstrate several different task-specific criteria, which, individually, link to more than one cell; and could, therefore, be used to help demonstrate achievement in more than one cell of a principle.

Optional Skills Assessment Materials for Year 5 | An overview

Similarly, one piece of learner evidence might demonstrate achievement in cells in more than one principle.

The methodology that teachers employ to assess learners' progress will differ from one classroom to another. It will be dependent on the learners, the classroom environment, the teacher's specific focus and the available resources. In order to assess the processes that learners use to reach their outcomes, it will be beneficial, at times, to listen in to learners' discussions with their peers.

Teachers may wish to identify specific learners to focus on before starting an activity, as in many of the activities it would be difficult to assess all learners at the same time.



Future developments

In spring 2010, DCELLS will provide Year 5 teachers with further OSAMs based on 'rich activities', each covering more than one of the developing skills areas.

DCELLS is also developing web-based materials to exemplify good practice in developing thinking across the subjects and subject areas, including cross-curricular themed materials. The website will cover practice mainly from Key Stages 2 and 3 and will be available from summer 2009.

List of OSAM resources

Optional Skills Assessment Materials for Year 5 – An overview

Developing thinking

Teacher's guide

Activities book

CD-ROM (includes PowerPoint presentations, multimedia files and PDF versions of the above materials for Developing thinking)

Developing communication

Teacher's guide

Activity books:

- Faces (and accompanying CD-ROM)

- Different ways of storytelling (and accompanying CD-ROM)

A3 poster – Native American storytelling

The Three Farm Lads – story booklet

CD-ROM (includes PDF versions of the above materials for Developing communication)

Developing number

Teacher's guide

Activity books:

- Mosaics (and accompanying CD-ROM)

- Time (and accompanying CD-ROM)

- Dinasfawr

- Then and now

- Secret codes

- Clocks

Poster – Dinasfawr A3 map

CD-ROM (includes PDF versions of the above materials for Developing number)

Acknowledgements

The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) is indebted to those teachers and their learners, within schools across Wales for their interest and willingness to take part in trials and piloting, and for their helpful feedback.

DCELLS would also like to thank the external suppliers who have been commissioned to develop these resources:

- Centre for Research in Primary Science and Technology (CRIPSAT) at the University of Liverpool
- the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER).

Their dedicated teams have played a major part in generating the ideas behind the resources and in working closely with practitioners to refine the new resources.