

Who does what in reading assessment?

NAPLAN and other system sanctioned tests are ‘*givens*’ for both principals and teachers. Most important, however, are the steps taken within schools to use diagnostic reading assessment tools focused on the learning needs of individual children and groups of children. So who does what across the school? The table below acknowledges the ‘*givens*’ and then describes 8 steps for principals and teachers.

PRINCIPALS	CLASSROOM TEACHERS
<i>Manage mandated requirements in literacy assessment (NAPLAN, any state based tests)</i>	<i>Comply with mandated requirements in literacy assessment (NAPLAN and any state based tests)</i>
1. Seek agreement on whole school level priorities in reading, noting particular classroom and student issues	(a) Participate in setting whole school level priorities, noting particular classroom and student issues
2. Seek agreement on whole school diagnostic reading assessment tools	(b) Participate in reaching agreement on the reading assessment tools to be used across the school
3. Ascertain professional learning needs related to diagnostic assessment and its use and implements PD as necessary	(c) Identify personal PD needs and learn how to use school agreed diagnostic reading assessment tools
4. Implement annual classroom planning for diagnostic reading assessment with teachers	(d) Discuss children’s progress with previous teacher and use information in planning classroom reading assessment
5. Put in place a cooperative practical student reading achievement tracking system for classroom use	(e) Implement the classroom assessment plan using achievement data to develop whole class, group and individual strategies for reading improvement
6. Monitor the tracking system for reading trends and the system’s effectiveness for each child	(f) Keep track of children’s progress during teaching using the school’s tracking system
7. Report to teachers and others (children, parents, care givers) on overall school reading standards and quality	(g) Provide timely and targeted process feedback to children on their achievement and improvement (and do so with parents, caregivers)
8. Return to Step 1 with teachers	(h) Return to Step 1 with the principal

NOTE:

A key finding from the work of Fletcher, Greenwood, Grimley and Parkhill (2011) shows that schools that make a difference in reading improvement develop the school-wide use of standardized assessment in reading to monitor achievement and identify specific needs.

[Other] findings indicate that effective literacy learning among primary school students is associated with teachers who have a sound knowledge of literacy processes at all levels of reading, plan explicit instruction around text, demonstrate an enthusiasm for improving reading outcomes for all children and have a substantive knowledge and interest in the literature for young adults. Developing students’ vocabulary knowledge and comprehension strategies has been identified as another critical success factor [for upper primary school children] (Fletcher, Greenwood, Grimley and Parkhill, 2011).