**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**UNIT –IV**

**Short Answers**

1. **What are the five types of tests?**

Progress Test

Achievement Test

Proficiency Test

Aptitude Test

Diagnostic Test

1. **What are the three important characteristics of a good test?**

Reliability – One can be confident that the score will be more or less the same whether the test is taken on a particular day or on the next.

Validity – It measures accurately what it is intended.

Administer Ability – It can be administered the ability of the students.

1. **What are the two components of reliability?**

The two components are:  performance of candidates from occasion to occasion and the reliability of the scoring.

1. **Aptitude Test**

It gives us guidelines to show if learners have the ability to learn a given subject.

1. **Diagnostic Test**

It is designed to identify and investigate the difficulties of the learners.

1. **Proficiency Test**

It tells whether a learner is ready to undertake a course at a particular level.

1. **Backwash Test**

It is harmful when the test content and testing technique are at variance with the objectives of the course. E.g. If the skill of writing is tested only by the multiple choice items then there is great pressure to practice such items rather than practice the skill of writing itself.

**8. Achievement Test**

The purpose is being to establish how successful individual students, group of students or the courses themselves have been in achieving objectives. They are of two kinds: final achievement test and progress achievement test.

1. **Mention any three test techniques to test the overall ability in language.**

Cloze Procedure Test – Mini Cloze, Conversational Cloze and Selected Deletion Cloze

C Test

Dictation

1. **What are the types of Rubrics/ Scoring/Grading?**

Holistic Scoring Method (Single Scale) – Evaluation based on its overall quality. It gives students a single, overall assessment score the paper as a whole.

Analytic Scoring Method (Multiple Scale) – Evaluation based on separate score for each dimension of task. It assesses how well the students perform on individual dimensions of whole performance.

1. **What is a Rubric?**

It is an evaluation tool for assessing a performance of the students. The two kinds are Holistic and Analytic.

1. **What is the difference between Direct Testing and Indirect Testing?**

Direct test items ask the student to complete some sort of authentic action. Indirect test items measure the students’ knowledge about a subject.

**13. Define Crediting and Certifying.**

Crediting is concerned with collecting evidence that a learner has achieved some instructional goals in contents in respect to a defined curricular programme. Certifying is concerned with giving evidence that the learner is able to perform a job according to the previously determined standards.

**14. What is Promoting?**

It is concerned with promoting students to next higher class.

**15. What is Selecting?**

It means selecting students from different courses after completion of a particular course structure.

**Essay Questions**

**1. Testing Overall Ability**

         The notion of overall ability is directly related to the commonsense idea that someone can be good (quite good or poor) at a language and that someone is good at a language because performance in one skill is usually a reasonable predictor of performance in another.

         The reduction of redundancy which estimates the learners’ overall ability by measuring how well they can restore a reduced text to its’ original form.

**Varieties of Cloze Procedure**

          The cloze procedure reduces redundancy by deleting a number of words in a passage, leaving blanks and requiring the person taking the test to attempt to replace the original words.

**Example:**

What is a college?

      Confusion exists concerning the real purposes, aims, and goals of a college.   What are these? What should a college be?

      Some believe that the chief function 1.\_\_\_\_\_\_ even a liberal arts college is 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_vocational one. I feel that the 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ function of a college, while important 4.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ nonetheless secondary.

      The cloze procedure seemed very attractive as a measure of overall ability because they were easy to construct, administer and score.

       Reports of early research seemed to suggest that it didn’t matter which passage was chosen or which words were deleted because they would still be a reliable and valid test of learners’ underlying language abilities.

        Unfortunately, it turned out that different passages gave different results, as did the deletion of different sets of words in the same passage.

        The validity of the procedure was brought into question and is agreed that the cloze procedure cannot be depended upon automatically to produce reliable and useful tests.

         There is a need for careful selection of texts, pre-testing and even careful deletion of certain words in order to make the test valid.

**Deletion Cloze**

          Deletion in this kind of procedure is chosen to provide ‘interesting’ items. Most of them might be inclined to regard as testing grammar, but to respond to them successfully, more than grammatical ability is needed: processing of various features of context is usually necessary. **Example:**  
 A language teacher may give the following passage to students:  
"Today, I went to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and bought some bread and peanut butter. I knew it was going to rain, but I forgot to take my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and got wet on the way."

The teacher instructs the students to fill in the blanks with words that they think best fits the passage. Both context in language and content terms are essential in most cloze tests. The first blank is preceded by "the"; therefore, a noun, an adjective or an adverb must follow. However, a conjunction follows the blank; the sentence would not be grammatically correct if anything other than a noun were in the blank. The words "bread and peanut butter" are important for deciding which noun to put in the blank; "supermarket" is a possible answer; depending on the student, however, the first blank could either be store, supermarket, shop or market, while umbrella or raincoat fit the second.

**Conversational Cloze**

         If the teacher wants to measure of overall ability to reflect (and hopefully predict) oral as well as written ability, he can use passages which represent spoken language.

         This way, he can easily predict the oral ability of students who have had exposure to the language.

          This is why he should support cloze tests on passages that reflect the kind of language that is relevant for the overall ability.

**Example:**

Mother: I love that dress, Mum.

                   Grandmother: Oh, it’s simple and neat.

                   Mother: Is it?

                   Grandmother: Yes, but it is twenty pounds.

                   Mother: My goodness, it’s not, Mum.

                   Grandmother: But it’s made of that t-shirt stuff, so I don’t it’ll wash very 1.\_\_\_\_\_\_. You know, they go all…… sort 2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_...I know the kind, Yes.

**Mini-cloze Items**

           These may take various forms, such as the exchange between two or more people with just one gap. In this way, the teacher can cover just the structures and vocabulary that he wants to, and include whatever features of spoken language are relevant to the purpose. The one disadvantage by comparison with more normal cloze is that the context that must be taken into account in order to fill a gap correctly is very restricted, but for such purposes as placement testing, this would not seem a serious defect.

**Example:**

                   A: What time is it?

                   B: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a quarter to three.

                   A: You look tired.

                   B. Yes, I stayed \_\_\_\_\_\_ really late last night. Had to finish that book?

**The C-test**

          Instead of whole words, it is the second half of every word that is deleted.

          The supposed advantages of the C-Test over the more traditional cloze procedure are that only exact scoring is necessary (native speakers effectively scoring 100 per cent) and that shorter (and so more) passages are available.

          This last point means that a wider range of topics, styles and levels of ability are possible.

          The possible disadvantages relate to the nature of the task. It is harder to read than a cloze passage, and correct responses can often be found in the surrounding text.

**Example:**

           There are usually five men in the crew of a fire engine. One o\_\_ them dri\_\_ the eng\_\_. The lea\_\_ sits bes\_\_ the dri\_\_. The ot\_\_ firemen s\_\_ inside t\_\_ cab o\_\_ the f\_\_ engine.T\_\_ leader kn\_\_ how t\_\_ fight diff\_\_ sorts o\_\_ fires.S\_\_, when t\_\_ firemen arr\_\_ at a fire, it is always the leader who decides how to fight a fire. He tells each firemen what to do.

**Dictation**

Dictation tests give results similar to those obtained from cloze tests. In predicting overall ability they have the advantage of involving listening ability. When using dictation, the same considerations should give the choice of passages as with the cloze procedure. The passage has then to be broken down into stretches that will be spoken without a break.

          These should be fairly long, beyond rote memory, so that the learners will have to decode, store, and then re-encode what they hear.

**Mini-partial-dictation Items**

           Dictation suffers from the same disadvantage as cloze. For that reason, a series of mini-dialogues (possibly mixed with monologues) of the following kind can be constructed. The student sees:

                   A: When can I see you again?

                   B: How about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Thursday?

**And hears:**

                   When can I see you again?

                   How about a week on Thursday?

**2. Evaluation in Teaching and Learning Process**

1. Concept of Evaluation

 2. Definition of Evaluation

3. Characteristics

 4. Steps Involved

**Concept of Evaluation:**

The whole cycle of social development revolves around the evaluation process. In education how much a child has succeeded in his aims, can only be determined through evaluation. Thus there is a close relationship between evaluation and aims.

Education is considered as an investment in human beings in terms of development of human resources, skills, motivation, knowledge and the like. Evaluation helps to build an educational programme, assess its achievements and improve upon its effectiveness. It serves as an in-built monitor within the programme to review the progress in learning from time to time. It also provides valuable feedback on the design and the implementation of the programme. Thus, evaluation plays a significant role in any educational programme. Evaluation plays an enormous role in the teaching-learning process. It helps teachers and learners to improve teaching and learning. Evaluation is a continuous process and a periodic exercise. It helps in forming the values of judgement, educational status, or achievement of student. Evaluation in one form or the other is inevitable in teaching-learning, as in all fields of activity of education judgements need to be made.

In learning, it contributes to formulation of objectives, designing of learning experiences and assessment of learner performance. Besides this, it is very useful to bring improvement in teaching and curriculum. It provides accountability to the society, parents, and to the education system.

**It’s Uses:**

**(i) Teaching:**

Evaluation is concerned with assessing the effectiveness of teaching, teaching strategies, methods and techniques. It provides feedback to the teachers about their teaching and the learners about their learning.

**(ii) Curriculum:**

The improvement in courses/curricula, texts and teaching materials is brought about with the help of evaluation.

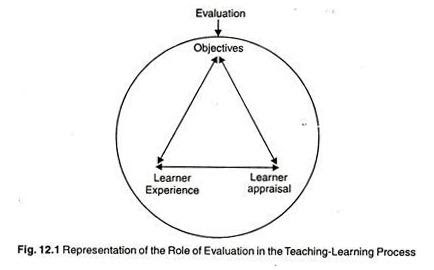
**(iii) Society:**

Evaluation provides accountability to society in terms of the demands and requirements of the employment market.

**(iv) Parents:**

Evaluation mainly manifests itself in a perceived need for regular reporting to parents. It also helps the parents to take decisions about success in their children’s specific future activities and provides guidance to further studies and occupation. Some of the educationists view evaluation virtually synonymous with that of learner appraisal, but evaluation has an expanded role.

A simple representation explaining the role of evaluation in the teaching-learning process is shown below:



Evaluation has its four different aspects namely:

(i) Objectives

(ii) Learning Experiences

(iii) Learner Appraisal

(iv) Relationship between the Three

**Characteristics of Evaluation:**

1. Evaluation implies a systematic process which omits the casual uncontrolled observation of learners.

2. Evaluation is a continuous process. In an ideal situation, the teaching- learning process on the one hand and the evaluation procedure on the other hand, go together. It is certainly a wrong belief that the evaluation procedure follows the teaching-learning process.

3. Evaluation emphasizes the broad personality changes and major objectives of an educational programme. Therefore, it includes not only subject-matter achievements but also attitudes, interests and ideals, ways of thinking, work habits and personal and social adaptability.

4. Evaluation always assumes that educational objectives have previously been identified and defined. This is the reason why teachers are expected not to lose sight of educational objectives while planning and carrying out the teaching-learning process either in the classroom or outside it.

5. A comprehensive programme of evaluation involves the use of many procedures (for example, analytico-synthetic, heuristic, experimental, lecture, etc.); a great variety of tests (for example, essay type, objective type, etc.); and other necessary techniques (for example, socio-metric, controlled-observation techniques, etc.).

6. Learning is more important than teaching. Teaching has no value if it does not result in learning on the part of the learners.

7. Objectives and accordingly learning experiences should be so relevant that ultimately they should direct the learners towards the accomplishment of educational goals.

8. To assess the learners and their complete development brought about through education is evaluation.

9. Evaluation is the determination of the congruence between the performance and objectives.

**3. Steps Involved in Evaluation:**

Following are the few steps involved in the process of evaluation:

**(i) Identifying and Defining General Objectives:**

* In the evaluation process first step is to determine what to evaluation, i.e., to set down educational objectives. What kind of abilities and skills should be developed when a student studies, say, Mathematics, for one year? What type of understanding should be developed in the student who learns his mother tongue? Unless the teacher identifies and states the objectives, these questions will remain unanswered.
* The process of identifying and defining educational objectives is a complex one; there is no simple or single procedure which suits all teachers. Some prefer to begin with the course content, some with general aims, and some with lists of objectives suggested by curriculum experts in the area.
* While stating the objectives, therefore, we can successfully focus our attention on the product i.e., the student’s behaviour, at the end of a course of study and state it in terms of his knowledge, understanding, skill, application, attitudes, interests, appreciation, etc.

**(ii) Identifying and Defining Specific Objectives:**

* It has been said that learning is the modification of behaviour in a desirable direction. The teacher is more concerned with a student’s learning than with anything else. Changes in behaviour are an indication of learning. These changes, arising out of classroom instruction, are known as the learning outcome.
* What type of learning outcome is expected from a student after he has undergone the teaching-learning process is the first and foremost concern of the teacher. This is possible only when the teacher identifies and defines the objectives in terms of behavioural changes, i.e., learning outcomes.
* The specific objectives will provide direction to teaching-learning process. Not only will that it also be useful in planning and organizing the learning activities, and in planning and organizing evaluation procedures too.
* The specific objectives determine two things; one, the various types of learning situations to be provided by the class teacher to his students and second, the method to be employed to evaluate both—the objectives and the learning experiences.

**(iii) Selecting Teaching Points:**

* The next step in the process of evaluation is to select teaching points through which the objectives can be realized. Once the objectives are set up, the next step is to decide the content (curriculum, syllabus, and course) to help in the realization of objectives.
* For the teachers, the objectives and courses of school subjects are ready at hand. His job is to analyze the content of the subject matter into teaching points and to find out what specific objectives can be adequately realized through the introduction of those teaching points.

(**iv) Planning Suitable Learning Activities:**

* In the fourth step, the teacher will have to plan the learning activities to be provided to the students and, at the same time, bear two things in mind—the objectives as well as teaching points. The process then becomes three dimensional, the three co-ordinates being objectives, teaching points and learning activities. The teacher gets the objectives and content readymade.
* He is completely free to select the type of learning activities. He may employ the analytico-synthetic method; he may utilize the inducto-deductive reasoning; he may employ the experimental method or a demonstration method; or he may put a student in the position of a discoverer; he may employ the lecture method; or he may ask the students to divide into groups and to do a sort of group work followed by a general discussion; and so on. One thing he has to remember is that he should select only such activities as will make it possible for him to realize his objectives.

**(v) Evaluating:**

* In the fifth step, the teacher observes and measures the changes in the behaviour of his students through testing. This step adds one more dimension to the evaluation process. While testing, he will keep in mind three things-objectives, teaching points and learning activities; but his focus will be on the attainment of objectives. Thus he cannot do without enlisting the teaching points and planning learning activities of his students.
* Here the teacher will construct a test by making the maximum use of the teaching points already introduced in the class and the learning experiences already acquired by his students. He may plan for an oral lest or a written test; he may administer an essay type test or an objective type of lest; or he may arrange a practical test.

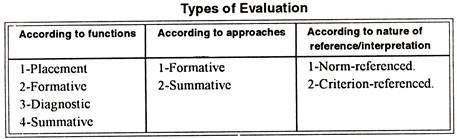
**(vi) Using the Results as Feedback:**

* The last, but not the least, important step in the evaluation process is the use of results as feedback. If the teacher, after testing his students, finds that the objectives have not been realized to a great extent, he will use the results in reconsidering the objectives and in organizing the learning activities.
* He will retrace his steps to find out the drawbacks in the objectives or in the learning activities he has provided for his students. This is known as feedback. Whatever results the teacher gets after testing his students should be utilized for the betterment of the students.

**4. Types of Evaluation**

Evaluation can be classified into different categories in many ways.

**Some important classifications are as follows:**

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**A. Placement Evaluation:**

Placement Evaluation is designed to place the right person in the right place. It ensures the entry performance of the pupil. The future success of the instructional process depends on the success of placement evaluation. It aims at evaluating the student’s entry behaviour in a sequence of instruction. In other words the main goal of such evaluation is to determine the level or position of the child in the instructional sequence.

**When a student is to undertake a new instruction, it is essential to know the answer of the following questions:**

a. Does the student possess required knowledge and skills for the instruction?

b. Whether the student has already mastered some of the instructional objectives or not?

c. Whether the mode of instruction is suitable to student’s interests, work habits and personal characteristics?

To get the answer to all the probable questions by using a variety of tests, self report inventories, observational techniques, case study, attitude test and achievement tests.

Sometimes past experiences, which inspire for present learning, also lead to the further placement in a better position or admission. This type of evaluation is helpful for admission of pupils into a new course of instruction.

**Examples:**

i. Aptitude test

ii. Self-reporting Inventories

iii. Observational Techniques

iv. Medical Entrance Exam.

v. Engineering or Agriculture Entrance Exam.

**B. Formative Evaluation:**

Formative Evaluation is used to monitor the learning progress of students during the period of instruction. Its main objective is to provide continuous feedback to both teacher and student concerning learning successes and failures while instruction is in process. It helps a teacher to ascertain the pupil-progress from time to time. At the end of a topic or unit or segment or a chapter, the teacher can evaluate the learning outcomes basing on which he can modify his methods, techniques and devices of teaching to provide better learning experiences. The teacher can even modify the instructional objectives, if necessary. In other words, formative evaluation provides feedback to the teacher. The teacher can know which aspects of the learning task were mastered and which aspects were poorly or not at all mastered by students. It is concerned with the process of development of learning. It is a positive evaluation because of its attempt to create desirable learning goals and tools for achieving such goals. Formative evaluation is generally concerned with the internal agent of evaluation, like participation of the learner in the learning process.

**The functions of formation evaluation are:**

**(a) Diagnosing:**

Diagnosing is concerned with determining the most appropriate method or instructional materials conducive to learning.

**(b) Placement:**

Placement is concerned with the finding out the position of an individual in the curriculum from which he has to start learning.

**(c) Monitoring:**

Monitoring is concerned with keeping track of the day-to- day progress of the learners and to point out changes necessary in the methods of teaching, instructional strategies, etc.

**The characteristics of formative evaluation are as follows:**

1. It reinforces learning of the students.
2. It pinpoints difficulties being faced by weak learners.
3. It helps in modification of instructional strategies including method of teaching, immediately.
4. It motivates learners, as it provides them with knowledge of progress made by them.
5. It is generally a teacher-made test.
6. It does not take much time to be constructed.

**Examples:**

i. Monthly Tests.

ii. Class Tests.

iii. Periodical Assessment.

iv. Teacher’s Observation etc

**C. Diagnostic Evaluation:**

It is concerned with identifying the learning difficulties or weakness of students during instruction. It tries to locate or discover the specific area of weakness of a pupil in a given course of instruction and also tries to provide remedial measure. When the teacher finds that in spite of the use of various alternative methods, techniques and corrective prescriptions the child still faces learning difficulties, he takes recourse to a detailed diagnosis through specifically designed tests called ‘diagnostic tests’. It can be made by employing observational techniques, too. In case of necessity the services of psychological and medical specialists can be utilized for diagnosing serious learning handicaps.

**D. Summative Evaluation:**

Summative evaluation is done at the end of a course of instruction to know to what extent the objectives previously fixed have been accomplished. In other words, it is the evaluation of pupils’ achievement at the end of a course. The main objective of the summative evaluation is to assign grades to the students. It indicates the degree to which the students have mastered the course content. It helps to judge the appropriateness of instructional objectives. It tries to compare one course with another. The approaches of summative evaluation imply some sort of final comparison of one item or criteria against another. It has the danger of making negative effects.

* This evaluation may brand a student as a failed candidate, and thus causes frustration and setback in the learning process of the candidate, which is an example of the negative effect.
* The traditional examinations are generally summative evaluation tools. Tests for formative evaluation are given at regular and frequent intervals during a course; whereas tests for summative evaluation are given at the end of a course or at the end of a fairly long period (say, a semester).

**Examples:**

1. Traditional School and University Examination

2. Teacher-made Tests

3. Standardised Tests

4. Practical and Oral Tests

5. Rating Scales

**E. Norm-Referenced and Criterion-Referenced Evaluation:**

Two alternative approaches to educational testing that must be thoroughly understood are norm-referenced testing and criterion-referenced testing. Although there are similarities between these two approaches to testing, there are also fundamental differences between norm and criterion referenced testing. There have been disputations about the relative virtues of norm and criterion-referenced measurements for a long time. However, a fundamental fact is recognized by most of concerned people that norm-referenced and criterion-referenced testing are complementary approaches.

**(i) Criterion-Referenced Evaluation:**

* When the evaluation is concerned with the performance of the individual in terms of what he can do or the behaviour he can demonstrate is termed as criterion- referenced evaluation. In this evaluation there is a reference to a criterion.

**Examples:**

(i) Raman got 93 marks in a test of Mathematics.

(ii) A typist types 60 words per minute.

(iii) Arun’s score in a reading test is 70.

**(ii) Norm Referenced Evaluation:**

* Norm-referenced evaluation is the traditional class-based assignment of numerals to the attribute being measured. It means that the measurement act relates to some norm, group or a typical performance.
* It is an attempt to interpret the test results in terms of the performance of a certain group. This group is a norm group because it serves as a referent of norm for making judgements.

**Examples:**

(i) Raman stood first in Mathematics test in his class.

(ii) The typist who types 60 words per minute stands above 90 percent of the typists who appeared the interview.

(iii) Arun surpasses 65% of students of his class in reading test.

**5. Need and Importance of Testing:**

Now a day, education has multifold programmes and activities to inculcate in students a sense of common values, integrated approach, group feelings, and community interrelationship leading to national integration and knowledge to adjust in different situations.

Testing the students’ learning level assesses the effectiveness of worth of an educational experience which is measured against instructional objectives.

**Testing is done to fulfill the following needs:**

(a). It helps a teacher to know his students in detail. Today, education is child-centered. So, child’s abilities, interest, aptitude, attitude etc., are to be properly studied so as to arrange instruction accordingly.

(b) It helps the teacher to determine, evaluate and refine his instructional techniques.

(c) It helps him in setting, refining and clarifying the objectives.

(d) It helps him to know the entry behaviour of the students.

(e) In educational decisions on selections, classification and placement.

(f) Education is a complex process. Thus, there is a great need of continuous testing and evaluation of its processes and products. It helps to design better educational programmes.

(g) The parents are eager to know about the educational progress of their children and the testing and evaluation alone can assess the students’ progress from time to time.

(h) It helps a student in encouraging good study habits, in increasing motivation and in developing abilities and skills, in knowing the results of progress and in getting appropriate feedback.

From the above information it is quite evident that testing is quite essential for promoting students’ growth. It is equally helpful to parents, teachers, administrators and students.

**6. Types of Tests**

There are two types of tests and examination in English:

**Traditional or Essay Type**

In this type of test all the questions set in examination are of essay type. These days such tests have been highly criticized. According to Benjamin, 'The traditional essay type of examination has been found rather unsatisfactory and its limitations are well known. Scientific investigations have proved that these examinations are frustrating and extremely unreliable for the evaluation of students' achievement and abilities 'for improving the system of examination many a suggestion have been given.

Some of these are as follows:

i) Examination in English should be a judicious combination of objective tests, short answer questions and essay type questions.

ii) Due weigh age must be given to all types of questions.

**New type**

In this type of examination the questions set are of objective test, short answer type and essay type. New type tests and examination are of two types:

i) Oral and ii) Written

**i) Oral:** It is used to test reading, comprehension, expression. Some of the various devices used to test these are as follows:

**Reading:** The teacher must ask the students to read a passage one by one and must note their pronunciation, stress, speed, and intonation.

**Comprehension:** Auditory comprehension: The teacher must need a passage and ask question on that.

**Reading comprehension:** The teacher must ask students to read a passage and then ask some questions on that passage.

**Picture comprehension:** The teacher must show a picture to the students and then ask some questions based on the picture.

**Story comprehension:** The teacher must relate a story before students and then ask some questions on that story.

**Expression:** Three levels of expression in speech are:

1. Ability to report a single simple act or situation in precise words.

2. Ability to express a sequence of ideas fluently.

3. Ability to converse.

Expression tests can be taken as follows:

1. The teacher must perform some actions and he ask students to describe them.

2. The teacher must show a picture and ask students to describe it.

3. The teacher must ask some general question.

4. The teacher must give a topic and ask students to speak a few sentences on that.

**(ii)Written Test:**

Witten test may aim at the assessment of not only graphic skills but also to some extent of audio-lingual skills. Objective written tests have the advantage of pinpointing problems of learning. Dictation for example may test both graphic and audio-lingual skills. In early stages of learning continuous writing can be tested objectively by assessing certain factors in isolation. Essay writing should not be tried in the easy stages. It is not an appropriate test at all levels.

**7. What are the qualities of a good test?**

**A good test gives all students an equal opportunity to fully demonstrate their learning**. With this in mind, the student might reflect on the nature and parameters of the exam. For example: Could the exam be administered as a take-home test? Two students might know the material equally well, but one of them might not perform well under the pressure of a timed or in-class testing situation. In such a case, what is it that the teacher really wants to assess: how well each student knows the material, or how well each performs under pressure? Likewise, it might be appropriate to allow students to bring memory aids to an exam. Again, what is it that the teacher wants to assess: their ability to memorize a formula or their ability to use and apply a formula?

**Consistency:**  If the teacher gives the same test twice to the same students, they should get a similar grade each time.

**Validity:** Make sure the questions address what the teacher wants to evaluate.

**Realistic Expectations:** The test should contain questions that match the average student’s ability level. It should also be possible to respond to all questions in the time allowed. To check the test, ask a teaching assistant to take the test – if they can’t complete it in well under the time permitted then the test needs to be revised.

**Multiple Question Types:** Students attend various types of tests in order to demonstrate their abilities. The test should include a various types of questions.

**Offer Multiple Ways to Obtain Full Marks:**  Tests can be highly stressful and artificial ways to demonstrate knowledge. In recognition of this, the teacher may want to provide questions that allow multiple ways to obtain full marks. For example, ask students to list five of the seven benefits of multiple-choice questions.

**Free of Bias:**  The students will differ in many ways including language proficiency, socio-economic background, physical disabilities, etc. When constructing a test, the teacher should keep student differences in mind to watch for ways that the tests could create obstacles for some students. For example, the use of colloquial language could create difficulties for students whose first language is not English, and examples easily understood by the students may be inaccessible to international students.

**Redeemable:**  A test does not need to be the sole opportunity to obtain marks. Assignments and midterms allow students to practice answering your types of questions and adapt to your expectations.

**Demanding:**  A test that is too easy does not accurately measure students’ understanding of the material.

**Transparent Marking Criteria:** Students should know what is expected of them. They should be able to identify the characteristics of a satisfactory answer and understand the relative importance of those characteristics. This can be achieved in many ways; the teacher can provide feedback on assignments, describe their expectations in class, or post model solutions.

**Timely:**  Spread tests out over the semester. Giving two exams one week apart doesn’t give students adequate time to receive and respond to the feedback provided by the first exam. When possible, plan the tests to fit logically within the flow of the course material. It might be helpful to place tests at the end of important learning units rather than simply give a midterm halfway through the semester.

**Accessible**: For students with disabilities, tests must be amenable to adaptive technologies such as screen-readers or screen magnifiers. Exams should have visual content such as charts, maps, and illustrations.

**8. Prepare questions to the students**

**Before the teacher starts preparing an exam:**

**Knowledge or how it is used:** The teacher can design the test questions to assess students’ knowledge or ability to apply material taught in class.

**Process or Product:** The teacher can test students’ reasoning skills and evaluate the process by focusing the marks and other feedback on the process they follow to arrive at a solution. Alternatively, he can evaluate the end product.

**The Communication of Ideas:** The teacher can evaluate students’ communication skills ­their ability to express themselves - whether this is by writing a cogent argument, or creating an elegant mathematical proof.

**Convergent Thinking or Divergent Thinking:** The teacher can test the students’ ability to draw a single conclusion from different inputs (convergent thinking). Or he may alternatively want them to come up with different possible answers (divergent thinking). Does he expect different answers from students, or does he expect all of them to provide the same answer?

**Absolute or Relative Standards:** Is student success defined by learning a set amount of material or demonstrating certain skills, or is student success measured by assessing the amount of progress the students make over the duration of the course.

**9. The Purpose and Parameters of the Test**

**To Evaluate and Grade Students:** Tests provide a controlled environment for independent work and so are often used to verify students’ learning.

**To Motivate Students to Study:** Students tend to open their books more often when an evaluation is coming up. Tests can be great motivators.

**To add variety to Student Learning:** Tests are a form of learning activity. They can enable students to see the material from a different perspective. They also provide feedback that students can then use to improve their understanding.

**To Identify Weaknesses and Correct Them:** Tests enable both students and instructors to identify which areas of the material students do not understand. This allows students to seek help, and instructors to address areas that may need more attention, thus enabling student progression and improvement.

**To Obtain Feedback on your Teaching:** The teacher can use tests to evaluate his own teaching. Students’ performance on the test will pinpoint areas where he should spend more time or change your current approach.

**To Provide Statistics for the Course or Institution:** Institutions often want information on how students are doing. How many are passing and failing, and what is the average achievement in class? Tests can provide this information.

**To Accredit Qualified Students:** Certain professions demand that students demonstrate the acquisition of certain skills or knowledge and a test can provide such proof.

The overall test should be consistent with the learning outcomes for the subject. There are a number of ways to review and prioritize the skills and concepts taught in a subject.

**10.** **Prepare a marking scheme or rubric**

Preparing a marking scheme ahead of time will allow the teacher to review the questions, to verify that they are really testing the material that the teacher wants to test, and to think about possible alternative answers that might come up.

**Look at what others have done:** Chances are the teacher that he is not the only person who teaches but look at how others choose to assign grades.

**Make a marking scheme usable by non-experts:** Write a model answer and use this as the basis for a marking scheme usable by non-experts. This ensures that the teaching assistants and the students can easily understand the marking scheme. It also allows that the teacher to have an external examiner mark the response, if need be. A [rubric](https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/assessing-student-work/grading-and-feedback/rubrics-useful-assessment-tools) can be an effective tool to help the teacher or the teaching assistants assess students’ work quickly and accurately. Sharing the rubric with the students as they begin to study for the exam is also a good idea.

**Give consequential marks.** Generally, marking schemes should not penalize the same error repeatedly. If an error is made early but carried through the answer, the teacher should only penalize it once if the rest of the response is sound.

**Review the marking scheme after the exam.** Once the exam has been written, read a few answers and review the key. The teacher may sometimes find that students have interpreted his question in a way that is different from what he had intended. Students may come up with excellent answers that may be slightly outside of what was asked. Consider giving these students partial marks.

**When marking, make notes on exams.** These notes should make it clear why the teacher gave a particular mark. If exams are returned to the students, his notes will help them understand their mistakes and correct them. They will also help the teacher should students want to review their exam long after it has been given, or if they appeal their grade.